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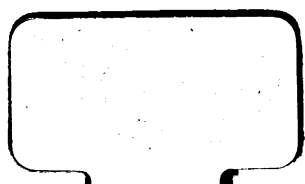
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THE CHRISTIAN

SOUVENIR





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THE
CHRISTIAN SOUVENIR;

OR,

Reflections for Every Day in the Year.

*SELECTED FROM
THE WRITINGS OF APPROVED AUTHORS.*

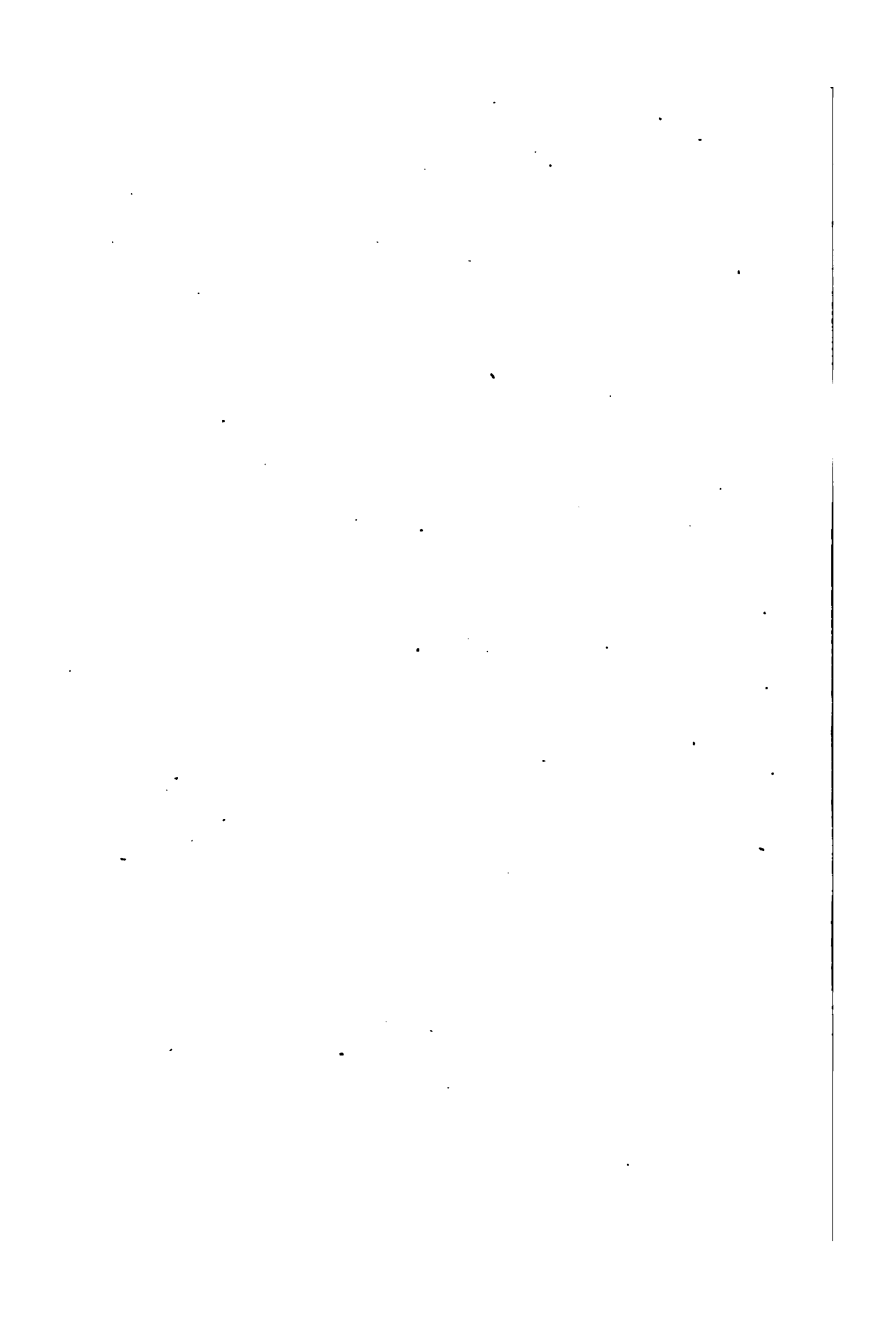
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THE CHRISTIAN SOUVENIR.

—♦—
January 1st.

'We spend our years as a tale that is told.'—Ps. xc. 9.

EVERY anniversary suggests to the thoughtful mind the same reflection, and neither its antiquity nor simplicity can impair its force. What distinction, what circumstance, so weighty, so affecting as this?—I shall not return! When, towards the close of life, a voyage is undertaken to another hemisphere, to a shore whence the adventurer never expects to revisit the land of his fathers, if he be of a reflective and a tender spirit, what preparations does not this voyage demand,—what objects does it not endear,—what emotion does it not awaken! But, 'when a few years are come' (may *every* Christian say), when a few more anniversaries have glided by, what a voyage is in prospect for *me*!—that vast and unknown voyage, whence, 'till the times of the restitution of all things,' I shall not return!—not return to the seasons of sacred retirement or social devotion, those golden hours to fit me for the skies; not return to that abode where alone I can imitate my descended Lord in doing and in suffering,—where He found labours enough to occupy an untiring zeal, and to engage till the last moment of His sojourn a celestial benevolence. He left a world replete with sorrows (though for His true disciples He bore away their sting), and I soon must leave it also. Then I can-

not return to wipe away one tear of affliction,—to lead back one wanderer from the edge of ruin,—to guide, and help, and comfort those who are most dear,—to soften the adversities of this life or invite to the joys of another ! And shall I pass these quickly circling years as if there were nothing to be done, to be subdued, to be acquired, to be imparted, before I launch my bark for that 'undiscovered country' ?

J. SHEPPARD, ESQ.

January 2d.

'For the love of Christ constraineth us.'—2 COR. v. 14.

I ABSOLUTELY surrender and resign myself to Thee. Thy love constrains me henceforth no more to live to myself, but to Thee, who diedst for me and didst rise again. And I subject and yield myself to Thy blessed light and power, O Holy Spirit of grace ! to be more and more illuminated, sanctified, and prepared for every good word and work in this world, and for an inheritance among them that are sanctified in the other ! Sinner, never give thy soul leave to be at rest till thou find it brought to some such transaction with God (the Father, Son, and Spirit) as this ; so as thou canst truly say, and dost feel thy heart is in it. Be not uneasy or impatient of waiting and striving, till thou canst say, This is now the very sense of the soul. Such things have been done in the world (but oh how seldom of latter days !).

'So God hath wrought with men to save them from going down to the pit, having found a ransom for them. And why may He not yet be expected to do so ? He hath smitten rocks ere now, and made the waters gush out ; nor is His hand shortened, nor His ear heavy. Thy danger is not, sinner, that *He* will be inexorable, but lest *thou* shouldst. He will be entreated, if thou wouldst be prevailed with to entreat His favour with thy whole heart.

REV. J. HOWE.

January 3d.

'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.'—
ROM. viii. 9.

A PRAYERLESS spirit is not the spirit of Christ : prayer to a Christian is as necessary as food to a natural man. The usual way of going to heaven is through much tribulation ; the sinner who is drawn to Christ is not he that has learnt that he is a sinner by head knowledge, but that feels himself such by heart contrition. He that believeth hath an unction from the Holy One ; a true Christian is as vitally united to Christ as my hand or foot to my body, and consequently suffers and rejoices with Him. Where there is true faith, there will be obedience and the fear of God ; he that lives by the faith of the Son of God, eateth his flesh and drinketh His blood. He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. Christians are sealed by the Holy Ghost to the day of redemption ; and to this seal they trust their eternal welfare, not to naked knowledge, or speculative notions, though never so deep.

REV. J. HART.



January 4th.

'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.'—ECCLES. xii. 7.

THE body falls asleep, and rests safely till the morning of the resurrection. The soul in a moment enters into the joy of its Lord,—a joy like His, pure and holy—a fulness of joy ; every sense has its proper object, enjoys it, and is satisfied for ever. Oh, what will the heart feel in this blessedness ! What acknowledgments will it make to God and the Lamb ! To praise Him for the wonders of His grace, in bringing to that glory, will be the happy enjoyment of eternity. To see Him as He is in His divine majesty, is heaven. For how great communications of His love the being ever with Him, and ever like

Him, will make the soul capable of, we cannot perfectly conceive. These things are at present too high and heavenly for our thoughts. These are happy moments, when we are permitted to behold the King in His beauty, when He discovers His matchless loveliness, and gives us a taste of the heavenly feast. At such blessed seasons the soul is bowed down and humbled to the dust, adoring the infinite mercy and goodness of God. If there be so much of heaven in these manifestations of divine love, what must the full enjoyment be !

REV. W. ROMAINE.



January 5th.

'For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.'—ROM. viii. 18.

IF we should reckon the cross amongst the benefits flowing to believers from their union with Christ, I judge we should not reckon amiss. Sure I am, the sufferings they suffer with Him, and the assurances they have of the cross, have rather the nature of a promise than of a threatening. The covenant of grace does truly beat the spears of affliction into pruning-hooks to them that are in Christ. Isa. xxvii. 9: 'By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.' Why then should we be angry with our cross? Why should we be frightened at it? The believer must take up his cross and follow his leader, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now that the Church of God is yet militant in this lower region, how can it be but the clouds will return after the rain? But the cross of Christ (which name the saints tremble to bear) is a kindly name to the believer. It is a cross indeed, but not to the believer's graces, but to his corruptions.

REV. T. BOSTON.

January 6th.

'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money : come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.'—ISA. lv. 1.

NO restraint, you observe, no exception of character, but the free offer of the God of all grace to every one that thirsteth. If, casting yourself upon the Saviour, you accept that offer, will not this thought lead your mind to devout adoration? All these blessings have come to me from God's gracious choice. Unworthy as I am of so great a privilege, yet, in His abundant love and overflowing goodness, in the day that He was planning this boundless extent of felicity, He thought on me ; He was pleased to put down my name in the book of life ; He was pleased to give me His dear Son ; and to say to Him of me, as 'the Captain of our salvation,'—Bring him to eternal glory ! It is difficult for the mind to dwell upon this excess of bounty without being overwhelmed with His goodness. How wonderful, that He should have ever thought of me, so poor, so weak, so vile, so unworthy !

REV. J. H. STEWART.

January 7th.

'Looking unto Jesus.'—HEB. xii. 2.

A MELANCHOLY Christian is guilty of looking too much unto himself, and too little to a Saviour ; we pore upon the disease till we forget the physician, and hence arise complaints to this purpose : Oh, what a vile heap of thoughts and affections are within me !—profane, impure haughty, revengeful, covetous, and unbelieving. Now, if looking within is so dreadful a work, let us try what looking unto Jesus will do : 'Behold, O Lord, I am vile ; but here is the more guilt for Thee to pardon, here is

the more disorder for Thee to cure. Experience tells me that I can do nothing ; but faith in the Lord tells me that Thou canst be all. The best that can be said of my righteousness is, that the principle is imperfect and the actions are confused ; but Thine is all right, and fair, and full ; and therefore as mine is not worth speaking of, " I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only." "

REV. T. BRADBURY.

January 8th.

'The joy of the Lord is your strength.'—NEH. viii. 10.

WHEN you get any sensible experiences of the Lord's love, improve them, not as the grounds of your faith, but as an encouragement to go on in trusting, and in believing upon the grounds of faith laid before you in the word. These sensible tastes of the Lord's loving-kindness are given you, not that you should doat upon the sweetness of them, but to encourage and further you in trusting and believing. It is a common fault among many believers in our day, when they find anything of sensible presence, then indeed they rejoice, and they have good reason so to do ; but no sooner doth a cloud come, but their faith as well as their joy vanishes, and they have as little trust to put in the word and promise of the God of their life, when His back is turned, or He out of their sight, as though they had never received a kindness at His hand. And this is a reason, I am convinced, why it fares so ill with many of us at this day ; and therefore let us amend it, and what comfort and joy we find in His presence, let it encourage and engage us to trust, and hope, and wait, and believe on Him when absent to our sense. And if we thus improve the marks of grace and consolations of His Spirit, the joy of the Lord shall be our strength, and our path shall be indeed as the path of the just, and as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

REV. E. ERSKINE.

January 9th.

'Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness.'—Ps. xlv. 7.

LET us but love the righteousness which He loves, and hate the iniquity which He hateth, and this of itself would soften and attune the mechanism of our moral nature, that in all the movements of it there should be joy. It is not sufficiently adverted to, that the happiness of heaven lies simply and essentially in the well-going machinery of a well-conditioned soul; and that, according to its measure, it is the same in kind with the happiness of God, who liveth for ever in bliss ineffable, because He is unchangeable in being good, and upright, and holy. There may be audible music in heaven; but its chief delight will be in the music of well-poised affections, and of principles in full and consenting harmony with the laws of eternal rectitude. There may be visions of loveliness there; but it will be the loveliness of virtue, as seen directly in God, and as reflected back again in family likeness from all His children. It will be this that shall give its purest and sweetest transports to the soul. In a word, the main reward of paradise is spiritual joy; and that, springing at once from the love and the possession of spiritual excellence. It is such a joy as sin extinguishes on the moment of its entering the soul; and such a joy as is again restored to the soul, and that immediately on its being restored to righteousness.

REV. DR. CHALMERS.

January 10th.

'Lord, remember me.'—LUKE xxiii. 42.

THERE is an hour awaiting thee, Christian, dark with 'the shadow of death,' covered with clouds, and full of terror,—the hour in which thy spirit, separated from its mortal companion, must shoot the untried gulf of eternity,—in which thy recollection of the Saviour is peculiarly important to thy safety and thy peace. In that hour,

Christian, forget not thy Lord, as thou wouldst not wish then to be forgotten by Him. Fix thy thoughts on Him, as the conqueror of death, the destroyer of the grave, the Lord of eternity ; and as it has been thy principal study to be like Him in His life, let it be thy closing ambition 'to be made conformable to Him in His death.' The remembrance of Jesus is a sovereign charm for chasing away those alarming visions which are apt to gather around a dying bed, and the persuasion of His love has often, in a great measure, superseded the agonies of dissolving nature.

REV. DR. J. BROWN.

January 11th.

'The word of truth.'—2 TIM. ii. 15.

How shall the sinner approach the God of justice ? Who will direct him to the healing streams ? The word of truth, the Bible : there will he find, by divine assistance, the wisdom unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. In vain, seduced by the dazzling systems of a reason, haughty and consequently fallen, will you pretend from it to receive the truth ; in vain, inflated with a little human science, will you persuade your vanity that you are in possession of the faith which is *foolishness to the world*. In the midst of these uncertain lights, your spirits will remain in outer darkness, and your souls, led astray by these erring guides, will err further and further from the source of life. Human instructions are merely the words of men ; they are the murmur of the fragile reed,—an empty sound that glides over the surface of a hardened heart. But Thy word, O Jesus, is living and efficacious ; *more penetrating than a two-edged sword, it reaches the soul, and judges the thoughts and intents of the heart*. Herewith Thou convincest man of sin, and showest him to himself in all his turpitude and misery. By its instrumentality Thou snatchest him from the *darkness* of sin, and makest him *pass into the kingdom of Thy marvellous light*.

REV. DR. MALAN.

January 12th.

'Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'—PHIL. I. 6.

THE Christian life consists not in metaphysical speculation ; and the believer will soon be convinced by the most overwhelming of all arguments, the argument of experience, that he is labouring under some grievous mistake, or is guilty of some mischievous perversion of the truth, if he finds in the doctrine of perseverance anything else than an encouragement and an impulse to persevere. When he feels that the world is in the way of an ascendancy in his heart ; that his affections are beginning to lose their hold of spiritual and divine things ; that his communion with God is more frequently interrupted, and yields him less satisfaction ; and that he is not so scrupulous as he once was on many points that involve the glory of God and the honour of the Redeemer,—it would appear to him, at such a moment, a very fearful and revolting idea to satisfy himself with the reflection that he cannot fall away, and to harden himself in his growing indifference by speculating on the doctrine of perseverance, at the very moment that he is conscious of ceasing to persevere. If he thinks at all, he must perceive that a cloud is beginning to interpose between him and the light of his Father's countenance. If the light of that countenance has ever been precious to him, he must feel that the source of his richest consolation is ready to be shut up ; he must be aware that the removal of the obstacle that obstructs the communication of spiritual comfort is identified with his return to his former love ; and if he has not apostatized so far as to cease putting any value on the divine favour, his anxiety will be, not to console himself with the abstract doctrine of perseverance, but how he may most speedily regain the path where alone perseverance will terminate in glory.

REV. DR. GORDON.

January 13th.

'So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.'—ROM. x. 17.

THE word of God! Have we thoroughly weighed the import of this expression? Have we felt all that it conveys? I fear not. We can read it without feeling that it is God who speaks,—that our eternal welfare is the subject,—that it is the sword of the Spirit which alone can give it saving power and efficacy. We can read it without trembling at it, and without self-application, and without prayer. We can read it merely for the gratification of curiosity. We can search it for arguments to support some favourable opinions, and we can close it again without ever dreaming that the eye of God is upon us while we are reading His word, and that our heart should be the better for what we read. And we can frame theories too, and devise rules by which we may determine when that volume, which comes to us as '*all* given by inspiration of God,' really speaks the word of God, and when it exhibits only the wisdom of man. And is it when read in this way that the word of God will become to us the fountain of life and the well of salvation? Alas! No.

REV. MARCUS DODS.

January 14th.

'And a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.'—ISA. xxxiii. 2.

WANTEST thou a shadow or covering to shelter thy weary soul from the scorching heat of divine anger, or of temptation from Satan, or tribulation from the world? Improve this righteousness, and sit down under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Wantest thou courage to look the law or justice of God in the face?

There is a fund for it ; for under this covering thou mayest look out with confidence, and say, Who can lay anything to my charge? Wantest thou to have the new covenant confirmed to thy soul? Improve this righteousness by faith : for Christ, by His obedience and death, confirmed the covenant with many. This blood is the blood of the New Testament ; and when the soul by faith takes hold of it, the covenant of grace is that moment confirmed unto it for ever. In a word, by virtue of this righteousness thou mayest come to a communion table, and to a throne of grace, and ask what thou wilt. Our heavenly Father can refuse nothing to the younger brethren who come to Him in their Brother's garment. By virtue of this righteousness, thou mayest lay claim to everything,—to all the blessings of time and eternity. May not all this revive thy drooping spirit, and make thee take up that song, ' In Thy name will I rejoice all the day, and in Thy righteousness will I be exalted ' ?

REV. E. ERSKINE.

January 15th.

' Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called ; and whom He called, them He also justified ; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.'—ROM. viii. 30.

EFFECTUAL calling is inseparably tied to eternal foreknowledge, or election, on the one hand, and to salvation on the other ; these two links of the chain are up in heaven in God's own hand, but this middle one is let down to earth into the hearts of His children, and they laying hold on it, have sure hold of the other two, for no power can sever them. If therefore they read the character of God's image in their own souls, those are the counterpart of the golden characters of His love in which their names are written in the book of life. Their believing writes their names under the promise of the revealed book of life. The Scriptures also ascertain them, that their names are in the secret book of life,

which God hath by Himself from eternity ; so that finding the stream of grace in their hearts, though they see not the fountain whence it flows, nor the ocean whither it returns, yet they know that it hath its source, and shall return to the ocean which ariseth from their eternal election, and shall empty itself into the eternity of happiness and salvation.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

January 16th.

' O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? '—ROM. vii. 24.

BE not thou cast down, dear reader, if the Lord the Spirit is teaching you the *same lesson* in the *same way* ; if He is now ploughing up the hidden evil, breaking up the fallow ground, and that, too, it may be, at a time of deep trial, of heavy heart-breaking affliction. Ah ! thou art ready to exclaim, ' all these things are against me ; I was at ease, but He hath broken me asunder ; He hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for His mark. His archers compass me about, He cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare. He breaketh me with breach upon breach, He runneth upon me like a giant ! ' Am I a child of God ? Can I be a subject of grace and at the same time be the subject of so much hidden evil, and of such deep overwhelming trial ? Is this the way He dealeth with His people ? Yes, dear believer, thou art not solitary nor alone, for along this path all the covenant people of God are travelling to their better and brighter home. Here they become acquainted with their own weakness, their perpetual liability to fall ; here they renounce their former thoughts of self-power, and of self-keeping ; and here, too, they learn more of Jesus as their strength, their all-sufficient keeper, more of Him as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Cheer up, then, for the Lord thy God is leading thee on by a safe and a right way to bring thee to a city of rest.

REV. O. WINSLOW.

January 17th.

'It was night.'—JOHN xiii. 35.

OH, ye followers of an illustrious Master, think of this night! Let your souls tremble at the contemplation of its shades; and, while you mourn over the bitterness of His cup of sorrows, while your souls bleed at the remembrance of His anguish, remember that He entered into the gloom of His cross and passion that your night might be turned into day; that you might be snatched from the region and shadow of death, to be put into possession of an inheritance of which there is this glorious record of everlasting sunshine, 'There shall be no night there!' And especially let your souls be melted into the tenderest emotions of wondering love and gratitude, when you call to mind that it was in this your Master's night of sorrow that 'He took bread;' that it was in the moment in which His appalling sufferings were at hand that He thought of you,—so remembered you, as to institute an ordinance for your joy and consolation; an ordinance fitted to make your soul full of light; an ordinance which, while it is traced with the precious blood and mental anguish of your Lord, is meant for your great and endless comfort. Oh, reader! when, by this ordinance, we find rivers of water in a dry land, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, a refuge from the heat and a shelter from the storm, let us not fail to remember the wormwood and the gall, the groans and the tears from which it proceeded; and, whilst rejoicing in the light, cease not to 'remember Him' who, by His *labour* of love, has taken the dimness from your eyes, quenched the bitterness of your death in the sharpness of His own, and become a light to lighten your darkness, by passing through the gloomiest night of humiliation for your sake.

REV. D. T. K. DRUMMOND.

January 18th.

'Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.'—2 COR. xii. 9.

THE word rendered *rest upon*, literally signifies *tabernacle upon*. The apostle's desire is, that the power of Christ may cover and enclose him all around, as a tent does the person who dwells in it. The man who, by faith, lays hold of the strength of Christ, dwells in this strength as in a tabernacle. He is fully surrounded by it; and, before he can be overcome, this tabernacle must be broken down. This it never can be by mere outward assault, but the cords and the pins of it may be loosened by unbelief, and then is the Christian weak, and 'like another man.'

When the apostle adds, 'when I am weak, then am I strong,' he does not merely mean that when he realized his own weakness, and cast himself on the strength of Christ, he received the strength he needed. This is true, but not the whole truth. The apostle, being exposed to infirmities, and reproaches, and persecutions, and necessities, and distresses for Christ's sake, and being covered and enclosed with the power of Christ, identifies himself, as it were, with Christ. If, then, by means of his weakness the strength of Christ was perfected, or more abundantly manifested than it would otherwise have been, he considered that weakness as so much strength gained. In other words, he lost sight of himself in Christ.

REV. JAMES CAMERON.

January 19th.

'This same Jesus.'—ACTS i. 11.

THE ark, when set in the holiest of all, had still the staves placed beside it (2 Chron. v. 9). By these it was known and marked to be the *very same ark* that

wandered with Israel in the desert. *The same ark* that Moses approached, and over whose mercy-seat he heard the voice of the Lord. *The same ark* at which the priest was wont to find acceptance on the great day of atonement. Corresponding to this type, the Lord Jesus, now in the presence of God for us, is spoken of as if He still had the mark of His death ; the Lamb, *as it had been slain* (Rev. v. 6). He has, we are sure, the self-same body that wandered and was weary here, and that hung upon the cross. By this He is known to be *the same Saviour* still. *The very same* to whom 'the woman that was a sinner came ;' on whose bosom John leant in such happy confidence ; who forgave Peter so graciously. And never will He lose His tender feeling for His own ; the glory round Him will never alter it. At His ascension, He spared them the pang of a farewell, leaving them ere ever they were aware, while pronouncing blessing, and while the pronounced blessing was falling upon them like evening dew. It will be thus at His coming again. Ever the same in tender and considerate feeling, He will prevent the possibility of a rising fear, by catching them up to meet Him in the air, ere ever they are well aware that He is come. And then shall He, who kindly asked in the garden, 'Woman, why weepest thou ?' wipe away the last tear from their eyes, and forthwith conduct them into the joy of their Lord, in the kingdom of His Father.

REV. A. A. BONAR.

January 20th.

'Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not ; for I am not yet ascended to my Father : but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father ; and to my God, and your God.'—JOHN XX. 17.

GRACIOUS Saviour, how full of love Thou art ! What condescension is in Thy nature ! What tenderness in Thy words ! Thou dost unite us so with God ; our timid hearts are comforted, our consciences quieted. What we

could not venture to hope, Thou teachest us to believe. We know Thy sonship, but we doubt our own ; yet, in one breath, Thou callest God *Thy* Father, and *ours* also, as if Thou wouldst prove, beyond all doubt, that in Thee He is ours, and that through Thee we are His. It is so of a truth. We behold God in Thee, and are glad. God beholds our nature in Thee, and is satisfied. Glorious Reconciler, in Thy single person accepting manhood and uniting Godhead ! More blessed in Thy giving than in Thy receiving. Thou hast condescended to take our form, and we will aspire to be conformed to Thine image, that Thou mayst be the first-born among many brethren. O help us, then, to live as ought the brethren of the Holy One. Let this be a name of power within us. Let it kindle in us all brotherly affections and kindred desires. Let it influence us to live worthy of Thy name. May we, who have already laid enough of sin on Thy devoted head, henceforth cast it from us and from Thee ! Like the brethren of Joseph, may we live on the fulness and rejoice in the brotherhood of Him whom we stripped and sold. This shall delight Thy heart ; Thou shalt see the travail of Thy soul, and shalt be satisfied.

REV. J. STEVENSON.

January 21st.

‘Lord, save me.’—MATT. xiv. 30.

THERE was no faithlessness in that petition ! Even at his lowest estate, the true believer is a believer still. He may begin to sink, but the cry of fear with him will also be the cry of faith ; while sinking, his eye will once more rest upon a merciful and pardoning Saviour ; while falling, he will cry with the falling psalmist, ‘O cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.’ We read that Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught Peter, and said unto Him, ‘O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ?’ Behold the blessed effects of a single heartfelt prayer ! Though beginning to

sink, it was not too late; though possessing but little faith, it was not too feeble. It was enough for our compassionate Redeemer that it was the cry of one who had no hope but in His mercy, yet in that mercy had the most unshaken confidence. These were the wings which carried that short petition, 'Lord, save me,' directly to the heart of Him to whom it was addressed. This, then, is a true specimen of acceptable prayer. With such an example and such an encouragement before us, let us ask ourselves,—Are these the feelings which occupy my heart when I raise my voice in prayer?

REV. H. BLUNT.

January 22d.

'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.'—Ps. li. 1.

HEAL us, O Lord, for nought, *that is*, for no merit of ours, but for Thy mercy. Lord, not to our merits, but to Thy mercy give Thy joy. Give us mercy to know that all gifts come from Thy goodness. Our flesh, though it seem holy, yet is not holy. We are all originally sinners as Adam; and in Adam, his leprosy cleaving faster to us than Naaman's did to Gehazi, so that even the infant, before it has seen the light of this world, has this blemish inherent in its members. Of ourselves we are unable so much as to think a good thought, unless Jesus, the Angel of great counsel, send it. We cannot perform a good work unless it be His work: it is His mercy that first goes before us, and gives us grace; like as it is the same mercy which follows after us, and keeps us in the same grace. It is not good to trust in *our* merits, in *our* virtues, or *our* righteousness, but *only* in God's free pardon as given us through faith in Jesus Christ.

WICKLIFFE.

January 23d.

'Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk,
O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.'—Ps. lxxxix. 15.

IT is delightful to live and walk in the shinings or God's countenance; but to die in the light and consolations of His presence, is (next to heaven itself) the crowning mercy of all. How gracious is the Holy Spirit or promise, to shine away the doubts and fears of His people, and put them to bed by daylight! Oh! may we taste the sweetness of His love, rise into a nearer conformity to His image, enjoy closer communion with Him, and experience an increasing sense of never-failing faithfulness, till we receive the end of our faith, even the full and ultimate salvation of our souls. I bless the Lord, I cannot doubt of His making all this our portion. He sometimes enables me to look, as it were, into His heart of everlasting love, and to catch a glimpse of that page in the book of life, where He has written my unworthy name; and in the strength of that comfort, I can travel many days. If the scanty vessel of imperfect faith can draw such water of comfort from the wells of salvation, what will be the blessedness of God's elect when they are taken up into glory, and there walk with Him 'high in salvation and the climes of bliss!'

REV. A. TOPLADY.

January 24th.

'Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'—2 COR. v. 17.

THE great question between a soul and God, is not whether we admit the truths of the Scripture into our understandings, but whether they are so applied to our hearts, as to have wrought a change, and become vital principles of faith and patience. Nothing short of this can afford evidence of a saved and safe condition. There is an action of the soul, by which it rests upon Christ,

and all that He has done, with full confidence, and this produces peace in the conscience. The more we see of ourselves, the more we see our sin ; and the more we see our sin, the more we fly to the death and righteousness of Christ for pardon, deliverance, and hope. We behold not only His sufficiency, but His willingness, to save the chief of sinners. For this we love Him ; and if we love Him, we desire and endeavour to keep His commandments.

REV. L. RICHMOND.

January 25th.

'Ye are come to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.'—HEB. xii. 23.

COULD we not now to consider ourselves as inhabitants of the eternal world, rather than of this, from which we are so soon to remove, and as fellow-citizens with the saints in heaven? Should we not, in the temper of our minds, and in the devotion of our hearts, be dwelling among angels and the spirits of the just made perfect ; and our eyes be habitually fixed on the Father, and on His Son Jesus Christ, and on the sacred Spirit, that out of the fulness of the Deity we may receive grace for grace? While it is the will of God we should remain here on earth, how can we be more suitably employed than in exerting all our powers to promote the Redeemer's glory, and the salvation of immortal souls? Thus let us be preparing for death, and when He calls us hence, may we be placing all our hopes on the atonement, righteousness, and grace of Christ : depart in peace, and be gathered to the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven.

REV. DR. BOGUE.

January 26th.

'The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.'—JOHN v. 28, 29.

CAN I, under *such* expectations, remain indifferent to the message of salvation, to the deeds and words of an almighty Redeemer? Thus, then, let me seek to arouse the dormant perception of spiritual realities, commencing the survey at home, contemplating the mysterious immortal inmate of my bosom. *Hence* let me ascend towards the throne of Him who is hid from mortal sight; *hence* fly to the cross of Him who stooped to mortal sorrows. But oh! Thou Spirit of holiness, who succourest mortal weakness, do Thou communicate to my soul the vividness of solemn thoughts, the depth of grateful sentiment, and cause me by Thy power, which is alone sufficient, to abound in hope. J. SHEPPARD, ESQ.



January 27th.

'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.'—REV. xxi. 1.

IN this world we are children standing on the bank of a mighty river. Casting our eyes upwards and downwards, along the channel, we discern various windings of its current, and perceive that it is now visible, now obscure, and now entirely hidden from our view. But being far removed from the fountain whence it springs, and from the ocean into which it is emptied, we are unable to form any conceptions of the beauty, usefulness, or grandeur of its progress. Lost in perplexity and ignorance, we gaze, wonder, and despond. In this situation, a messenger from heaven comes to our relief, with authentic information of its nature, its course, and its

end ; conducts us backward to the fountains, and leads us forward to the ocean.

This river is the earthly system of *providence*, the Bible is the celestial messenger, and heaven is the ocean in which all preceding dispensations find their end.

REV. DR. DWIGHT.

January 28th.

'Lord, it is good for us to be here.'—MARK ix. 5.

MY friend, you are no believer if Jesus hath never manifested Himself to your soul in your secret devotions, in the house of prayer, or in the breaking of bread, in so sweet and overpowering a manner, that you have cried out, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here.' But though it be good and very pleasant, like sunlight to the eyes, yet the Lord sees that it is not wisest and best always to be there. Peter must come down again from the mount of glory, and fight the good fight of faith amid the shame and contumely of a cold and scornful world, and so must every child of God. We are not yet in heaven, the place of open vision and unbroken enjoyment. This is earth, the place of faith, and patience, and heavenward-pointing hope. One great reason why close and intimate enjoyments of the Saviour may not be constantly realized in the believer's breast is, to give room for hope, the third string that forms the threefold cord. Even the most enlightened believers are walking here in a darksome night, or twilight at most, and the visits of Jesus to the soul do but serve to make the surrounding darkness more visible. But the night is far spent, the day is at hand. The day of eternity is breaking in the east. The Sun of Righteousness is hasting to rise upon our world, and the shadows are preparing to flee away. Till then, the heart of every true believer that knows the preciousness of close communion with the Saviour, breathes the earnest prayer, that Jesus would often come again, thus sweetly and suddenly to lighten him in his dark pilgrimage.

REV. R. M. M'CHEYNE.

January 29th.

'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'—HEB. xiii. 5.

MEDITATE, O my soul, upon what the Lord hath done for thee. He has called thee to the knowledge of His love of Jesus, and has shed it abroad in thy heart. He has set thee in the way that leads to the eternal enjoyment of His love, has promised to keep thee all the way, and to bless thee at the end of it. He will make thee blessed in death, and blessed for evermore. Hitherto thou hast found Him faithful. Not one good thing has failed which thou didst ask in faith, and wait for at His hands. Review all His dealings with thee, and see what infinite mercy there was in them. He made thy walk prosperous, thy warfare successful, thy crosses sanctified. Thou hast not taken a false step, but when thou wast not living by the faith of the Son of God. Oh! trust Him then, and be not afraid. His love has brought thee thus far; He has led thee in the right way to the verge of life, and He declares He will not leave thee nor forsake thee in the hour of death. Fear not to look down, fear not to go down with Jesus into the grave. He has promised, I will be with thee; and wherever He is, there is heaven.

REV. W. ROMAINE.

January 30th.

'Looking unto Jesus.'—HEB. xii. 2.

IT is ever the Holy Spirit's work to turn our eyes away from self to Jesus; but Satan's work is just the opposite to this, for he is constantly trying to make us regard ourselves instead of Christ; he insinuates your sins are too great for pardon, you have no faith, you do not repent enough, you will never be able to continue to the end, you have not the joy of His children, you have such a wavering hold of Jesus,—all these are thoughts about self, and we shall never find comfort or assurance by look-

ing within. But the Holy Spirit turns our eyes entirely away from self ; He tells us that we are nothing, but that Christ is all in all. Remember therefore, it is not thy hold of Christ that saves thee, it is Christ ; it is not thy joy in Christ that saves thee, it is Christ ; it is not even faith in Christ, though that is the instrument, it is Christ's blood and merits ; therefore look not so much to thy hand which is grasping Christ as to Christ ; look not to thy hope, but to Jesus the source of thy hope ; look not to thy faith, but to Jesus the author and finisher of thy faith. We shall never find happiness by looking at our prayers, our doings, or our feelings ; it is what Jesus is, not what we are, that gives rest to the soul.

SPURGEON.



January 31st.

'Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.'—
LAM. iii. 40.

JUDGE not Christ's love by providences, but by promises. Bless God for shaking off false foundations ; and for any way whereby He keeps the soul awakened, and looking after Christ. Better is sickness and temptation, than security and slightness,—a slighting spirit will turn a profane spirit, and will sin and pray too. Slightness is the bane of profession. If it be not rooted out of the heart by constant and serious dealings with and beholdings of Christ in duties, it will grow more strong and more steady by being under ordinances. Measure not thy grace by others' attainments, but by the Scripture. Be serious and exact in duty, having the weight upon thy heart ; but be as much afraid of taking comfort from duties as from sins,—comfort from any hand but Christ is deadly. Be much in prayer, or you will never keep up much communion with God,—as you are in closet prayer, so you will be in all other ordinances. Reckon not duties by high expressions, but by low frames and views of Christ. Tremble at duties and gifts. It was

the saying of a great saint, he was 'more afraid of his duties than his sins,'—the one often made him proud, the other always made him humble. REV. T. WILCOX.

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February 1st.

'I am a stranger in the earth ; hide not Thy commandments from me.'—PS. cxix. 19.

AS rational creatures, we know that 'our life is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.' As believers, we know that we cannot, and we would not, call this world our home ; and we are assured that it is far better to be without it, than to have our portion in it. But do we never feel at home in the midst of our earthly comforts, and thus forget our proper character, and our eternal prospects ? Does our conversation in the society of the world savour of the home whither we profess to be going ? To feel ourselves 'strangers in the earth,' and in the midst of the enjoyments of the gifts of God, to sit loose to them, as if our treasure were in heaven, is a sure mark of a gracious spirit. If the world, however, should be gaining ascendancy in our affections, let us only turn our eyes to the cross of Calvary ; let that be the object of our daily contemplation—the ground of our constant 'glorying.' And the world—what will it then be to us ? A 'crucified' object ! Let us not forget that we are looking forward and making progress towards a world where none are strangers—where all are children of one family, in one eternal home. 'In my Father's house,' said our gracious Head, 'are many mansions ; I go to prepare a place for you.'

REV. C. BRIDGES.

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February 2d.

'Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.'—1 COR. i. 30.

A CHRISTIAN never wants comfort but by breaking the order and method of the gospel, looking on his own

and off from Christ's perfect righteousness, which is to choose rather to live by candle-light than by the light of the sun. The honey that you suck from your own righteousness will turn into perfect gall ; and the light that you take from *that* to walk in, will turn into black night upon the soul. Satan is tempting thee by putting thee to boast about thy own grace to get comfort from it. Then the Father comes and points thee to Christ's grace (as rich, glorious, and infinitely pleasing to Him), and biddeth thee study Christ's righteousness. His biddings are enablings, a blessed power,—a sweet whisper,—checking thine unbelief. Follow the least hint,—close with much prayer,—prize it as an invaluable jewel ; it is an earnest of more to come. Again, if you would pray and cannot, and are so discouraged, see Christ praying for you, using His interest with the Father for you (John xiv. 16, and chap. xvii.). If you be troubled, see Christ your *peace* (Eph. ii. 14), leaving you peace when He went up to heaven ; again and again charging you not to be troubled, no, not in the least (sinfully troubled), so as to obstruct thy comfort or thy believing (John xvi. 1, 27). He hath borne all thy sins, sorrows, troubles, temptations, and is gone to prepare a mansion for thee.

REV. T. WILCOX.

February 3d.

' Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.'—MATT. vi. 33.

ALL things needful for the body, such a measure of all as God sees meet for the advancement of His kingdom—these *shall be added*, they shall be thrown in over and above. In seeking the peace and the love of God, you shall not only find what you more immediately seek, even the kingdom that cannot be moved, but also what you seek not, not at all for its own sake, but only in reference to the other. You shall find in your way to the kingdom all outward things, so far as they are expedient for you ; this care God hath taken upon Himself ; cast you all your

care upon Him. He knoweth your wants, and whatsoever is lacking, He will not fail to supply. Take no *uneasy* thought, even concerning those things which are absolutely needful for the body. Do not trouble yourself now with thinking what you shall do at a season which is yet afar off. All those distant views do not belong to you, who are but the creature of a day. Nay, what have you to do with *the morrow*, more strictly speaking? Why should you perplex yourself without need? God provides for you to-day what is needful to sustain the life which He hath given. It is enough, give yourself up into His hands; if you live another day, He will provide for that also.

REV. JOHN WESLEY.

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February 4th.

'If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?'—LUKE xi. 13.

HAS not 'the God of all patience and comfort,' by the lips of His beloved Son, most emphatically promised to them that ask Him this divine gift, this inestimable pledge? Is it a gift to be sought coldly, or entreated carelessly,—even the sovereign blessing of Him that has all the springs of joy? Surely the indifference or distaste which is now experienced by thee, with regard to the ordinary comforts and occupations of this life, will not be allowed to extend to those heavenly hopes which are essentially and everlastingly worthy of thy warmest pursuit; to that state where there will be an eternal plenty of spiritual delights, adequate to the satisfaction of immortal desires, and where these hallowed desires can themselves never languish or decline. Awake, O candidate for an incorruptible crown! address thyself to the Father of lights, as if some ray from the glory and beauty of His heavenly temple were poured upon thine inward vision, as if some faint echo of the hallelujahs of the perfect had visited thine ear.

J. SHEPPARD, ESQ.

February 5th.

'Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.'—HEB. vi. 20.

THE Redeemer who came down from heaven, has not only drawn aside the veil which separated that world from our view, but He is the forerunner ; He has entered within the veil for us with His own blood, and is gone to prepare mansions for His people. But for these scriptural and interesting truths, how could sinful dying worms endure the anticipation of the grand and all-important objects which are to burst upon their sight in another world? There we shall stand in the presence of a holy God, who is 'of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.' There we are to give 'an account of all the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.' There we shall hear the righteous and irrevocable sentence of an infinitely wise and just God ; and that sentence must be either, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world ;' or, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'

REV. J. TOWNSEND.

February 6th.

'We have also a more sure word of prophecy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.'—2 PET. i. 19.

YES, until One who caused the page to be written, makes the page speak, and speak of Him. Until He who left us this guide through the hours of darkness, says Himself once again, 'Let there be light,' and reveals Himself in our hearts by the Holy Spirit as 'the Sun of Righteousness risen with healing in His wings.' It is the office of the Bible to tell of Christ, to point us to Christ, to show the way to Christ : not to supersede, not to be

instead of Christ. When the soul, informed by the word, and at last quickened by the Spirit, has turned to the Lord ; when taught the way it has also taken it, and come, penitent and earnest, to Him to whom to come is at once eternal life ; then the first office of the Bible is fulfilled ; then in the individual soul the day has dawned and the day-star arisen. But even then—then more than ever—the soul has recourse daily to that which has quickened once. Then again for daily growth, as before for one renewal, it gives heed to the prophetic, the evangelic, and the apostolic word. Still, though blind and dead no longer, its home is in a dark place ; and it wants the lamp still, even though the inward dawn has begun. Still there is a watching and a waiting ; for still it is night, on the whole, and not day ; still the day-star shows not on the Church's horizon, nor is the dawn yet visible on the everlasting hills which encircle her dwelling. Thus, then, the lamp must shine on, and the faithful will give heed to it still. REV. C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.



February 7th.

'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.'—JOHN xiv. 6.

LET each of us now ask himself, Is Jesus Christ to me the Way, the Truth, and the Life ? Does truth—simple, pure, eternal truth—stand expressed and exhibited to me in these words, these prayers, these acts, these sufferings, that life, that death, of Jesus Christ ? The witness that He bore to the truth in the living of that life, and the dying of that death—have I listened to it, and believed in it, and submitted to it ? Am I of the truth, a simple, humble, earnest seeker after it ; and have I this evidence of my being so, that I hear the voice of Jesus—hear it and hail it among all the conflicting voices that are falling on my ear—as the voice of Him who rightfully claims the lordship of my soul ? Is truth—the truth as to God my Creator, my Father, my Redeemer—the truth as to myself, what I am, what I ought to be ? is this

truth not a mere form of sound words, not a mere congeries of acknowledged or accepted propositions; but does it stand before me embodied in the person, the life, the death, the mediation of Jesus Christ? and have I enshrined Him as King and Lord of my weak and sinful, and immortal spirit?

REV. W. HANNA.

February 8th.

'See that ye fall not out by the way.'—GEN. xlv. 24.

ARE ye fellow-citizens of heaven? Cherish the affections,—engage in the offices of mutual love. The tendency which a foreign soil has to bind closer the bands of affection, has often been noticed. The heart opens in a land of strangers. There, every countryman is an acquaintance,—every acquaintance is a friend,—every friend is a kinsman,—every kinsman is a brother. Show by your conduct that you feel this influence. Pilgrim citizens of Zion! 'See that ye fall not out by the way.' Oh! it ill becomes those who hope to spend an eternity of peace and love together in heaven, to quarrel with one another on earth. Are your prospects, as citizens of heaven, so glorious? Let not the afflictions of life make a disheartening impression on your spirits. Ye may well rejoice in tribulation, because ye 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' Let the words of promise be your 'song in the house of your pilgrimage.'

REV. J. BROWN.

February 9th.

'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.'—ROM. viii. 1.

HERE is indeed a rich and precious cabinet full of grace to be opened. Yet a key of small value may open it, if God please to direct the hand. Search all the

Scripture, you will not find any one chapter into which more excellent, sublime, evangelical truths are crowded. The Bible is the book of books, and this chapter must be styled the chapter of chapters ; from first to last it is high gospel, all gospel ; it is the abridgment, the storehouse, of all the saint's privileges and duties. You have in it the love of God and of Christ, shining forth in its greatest splendour. Blessed be God for every part of holy writ ; but specially blessed be God for the 8th chapter of the Romans. There is a vein of heavenly comfort running through the whole of it. It begins with no condemnation, it ends with no separation, and all the parts of it exactly correspond with these extremes. The sincere Christian here treads upon roses and violets ; there is nothing but honey in this hive. Let such as are in Christ (for that is the foundation of all) study, weigh, digest, believe, apply what is laid down in this chapter, and let them walk dejectedly if they can.

REV. DR. JACOMB.

February 10th.

'And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff ; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs.'—NUM. xiii. 23.

THOU camest to spy out the land of promise ; go not back without one cluster of grapes to show thy brethren for their encouragement. Let them see that thou hast tasted of the wine, by the gladness of thy heart ; and that thou hast been anointed with the oil, by the cheerfulness of thy countenance ; and hast fed of the milk and honey, by the mildness of thy disposition, and the sweetness of thy conversation. This heavenly fire would melt thy frozen heart, and refine and spiritualize it ; but it must have time to operate. Thus pursue the work till something be done, till thy grace be in exercise, thy affections raised, and thy soul refreshed with thy delights above. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing.

REV. R. BAXTER.

February 11th.

'Meditate upon these things.'—1 TIM. iv. 15.

PRAYER, meditation, reading the Scriptures, and hearing the word, are ordinances of God's appointment; if they are so, then that very appointment necessarily implies a promise, that there the Spirit of God will be ready to meet with His people, to impart to them of the spiritual blessings it is His to bestow; and that as often therefore as they engage in them, they are professedly waiting on Him for the fulfilment of this promise; and if such were their abiding impression regarding the solemnity and sacredness of these exercises, how different would be their manner of observing them from what it frequently is! How ready would they be to engage in them, lest by neglecting them they should be wilfully withdrawing themselves from under a divine influence, and forfeiting the blessing which was ready to be bestowed!

REV. DR. GORDON.



February 12th.

'O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.'—Ps. xxxiv. 8.

No tongue can tell how great that glory will be, which the Saviour will give thee, O believer! Surely, then, while thou art waiting for this glory which shall be revealed, thou wilt be going on from faith to faith, that thy beloved Saviour may become more dear to thee, and that thou mayest have more close and intimate communion with Him. Every day's experience should bring thee to love His appearing more. Having tasted how gracious He is, thou shouldst be longing for the marriage supper of the Lamb with fervent desire; and being now a father in Christ, and strong in faith, thou wilt be often looking up to Him, saying, Make haste, my beloved, and take me to Thyself. Let me see Thee face to face, and

enjoy Thee, Thou Saviour whom my soul longeth after. It is good to live upon Thee by faith, but to live with Thee is best of all.

REV. W. ROMAINE.



February 13th.

'And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap.'—JOSH. iii. 13.

THOUGH a believer may have fears and conflicts of soul when he is in the near prospect of death, yet commonly these are all over before the solemn moment of death comes. His spiritual enemies are usually made to be still as a stone, whilst he is passing through the river of death. Jesus, our great High Priest, hath dipped His feet in those waters. The stream therefore is divided unto thee, who art by faith united to Him. The channel is dry. Thou mayst discern the footsteps of thy Almighty Redeemer in the bottom, and endless felicity on the other side. Having already tasted the sweetness of pure consolation, thou shouldst long, with ardent and increasing desire, for 'the marriage supper of the Lamb.' He hath, by ten thousand thousand instances of kindness so endeared Himself to thy heart, that thou shouldst not be fully satisfied until thou have the full enjoyment of His immense and everlasting love; until thou see Him as He is, enjoy the unclouded light of His countenance, and be crowned with the unfading brightness of eternal glory.

REV. DR. COLQUHOUN.



February 14th.

'Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'—2 PET. iii. 13.

THE great work of Christ's disciples upon earth is a constant and busy process of assimilation to their Master

who is in heaven. And we live under a special economy, that has been set up for the express purpose of helping it forward. It is for this, in particular, that the Spirit is provided. We are changed into the image of the Lord, even by the Spirit of the Lord. Nursed out of this fulness, we grow up unto the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus; and instead of heaven being a remote and mysterious unknown, heaven is brought near to us, by the simple expedient of inspiring us where we stand with its love, and its purity, and its sacredness. We learn from Christ that the heavenly graces are all of them compatible with the wear of an earthly body, and the circumstances of an earthly habitation. It is not said in how many of its features the new earth will differ from, or be like unto, the present one; but we, by turning from our iniquities unto Christ, push forward the resemblance of the one to the other, in the only feature that is specified, even that 'therein dwelleth righteousness.'

REV. DR. CHALMERS.

February 15th.

'We preach Christ crucified.'—I COR. i. 23.

SURE I am, brethren, that the full faith of Christ crucified is required by our spiritual wants. In those dark hours when man is made to repossess the iniquities of his youth, when the arrows of the Almighty rankle in the soul, a miserable comforter would he prove, who should preach only the example set forth by Christ; for that example the sinner has not followed. In vain would he be told that the cross is a declaration of unconditional mercy; for conscience, knowing full well that the wages of sin is death, and convinced that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, would give the lie at once to such a mutilated gospel. Let me hear, when I am on the bed of death, that Christ died in the stead of sinners, of whom I am the chief; that He was

forsaken of God during those fearful agonies, because He had taken my place ; that on His cross He paid the penalty of my guilt. Let me hear, too, that His blood cleanseth from all sin, and that I may now appear before the bar of God, not as pardoned only, but as 'holy, and without blame.' Let me realize the great mystery of the reciprocal substitution of Christ and the believer ; or rather their perfect unity, He in them, they in Him, which He has expressly taught ; and let me believe that, as I was *in effect* crucified on Calvary, He will *in effect* stand before the throne in my person ; mine the sin, His the penalty ; His the shame, mine the glory ; His the thorns, mine the crown ; His the merits, mine the reward. Verily, Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my Righteousness.

BISHOP JEUNE.

February 16th.

'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.'—
Ps. cxix. 105.

ONE reason why I love the Bible so much, and prize it more and more, is, that the studies of twenty-five years have taught me that it is ever opening, disclosing new beauties and deeper thoughts. I delight to trace the developments of doctrine under successive dispensations ; to see how the New Testament supplements the Old, and the gospel accomplishes what the law could not do ; to feel in my adoring spirit how, after Matthew, and Mark, and Luke have given their vivid portraitures, John, with fuller insight, reveals Christ's higher nature ; to notice how the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church is brought out in the Acts and Epistles, while the Apocalypse lights up with its predictions the ages to come. I love to notice that, while all the writers declare a common truth, each retains his personal traits and style. I find a wonderful completeness there,—what we need to know, and all that we really require,—so that this Book has become to me a necessity of life. Never have I looked

to it in vain for a theme of discourse ; and I could find texts there for the preaching of a century.

JAMES HARRINGTON EVANS.



February 17th.

'Trust in Him at all times ; ye people, pour out your heart before Him ; God is a refuge for us.'—Ps. lxii. 8.

REMEMBER he that trusteth in the Lord shall receive strength to stand against all the assaults of his enemies. Be certain all the hairs of your head are numbered. Be certain your good Father hath appointed bounds, over the which the devil dares not look. Commit yourself to Him ; He is, hath been, and will be your keeper. Cast your care upon Him, and He will care for you. Let Christ be your scope and mark to aim at ; let Him be your pattern to work by ; let Him be your ensample to follow ; give Him, as your heart, so your hand ; as your mind, so your tongue ; as your faith, so your feet ; and let His word be your light to go before you ; in all matters of religion glorify God, both in soul and body. He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. Use prayer ; look for God's help, which is at hand to them that ask, and hope thereafter assuredly.

REV. JOHN BRADFORD.



February 18th.

'The night is far spent, the day is at hand ; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.'—ROM. xiii. 12.

AH ! drowsy, earthly heart, how coldly dost thou think of this reviving day !—Wouldst thou rather grovel on earth, than walk in the palace of God ? Art thou now remembering thy worldly business, thy earthly delights, and merry company ? Is it better to be here, than above

with God? Is the company better? Are the pleasures greater? Come away; make no excuse nor delay; God commands, and I command thee; gird up thy loins; ascend the mount; look about thee with faith and seriousness. Look not back upon the way of the wilderness, except it be to compare the kingdom with that howling desert, more sensibly to perceive the wide difference. Yonder is thy Father's glory; yonder, O my soul, must thou remove when thou departest from this body, and when the power of thy Lord hath raised it again, and joined thee to it; yonder must thou live with God for ever. There is the glorious New Jerusalem, the gates of pearl, the streets and pavements of transparent gold: that sun, which lighteth all this world, will be useless there: even thyself shall be as bright as yonder shining sun; God will be the sun, and Christ the light, and in His light shalt thou have light.

REV. R. BAXTER.

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February 19th.

'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.'—ISA. xlv. 22.

DESPAIRING sinner! thou lookest on thy right hand, and on thy left, saying, 'Who will show me any good?' Thou art tumbling over all thy duties and professions, to patch up a righteousness to save thee. Look at Christ now; look to Him and be saved, all the ends of the earth. There is none else. He is a Saviour, and there is none beside Him. Look anywhere else, and thou art undone. God will look at nothing but Christ, and thou must look at nothing else. Christ is lifted up on high, as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that sinners at the ends of the earth, the greatest distance, may see and live. The least sight of Him will be saving; the least touch healing to thee. And God intends thou shouldst look on Him; for He hath set Him up on a high throne of glory, in the open view of all poor sinners.

REV. DR. PECKWELL.

February 20th.

'Then said the King unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee, to the half of the kingdom.'—ESTH. v. 3.

WHAT is thy request? Ask, and it shall be given thee. I know the offers of the world, how tempting they are. What fair promises, what an amiable outside! but oh! I warn thee, *her vine* is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; her grapes of gall, *her clusters are bitter*. Come, then, *thou choosest that good part that shall not be taken from thee*; thou choosest rather, if it must be, *to suffer afflictions with the people of God*, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Art thou, O my will! thus honouring and blessing God, after thy ability, by a resolute choice of Him and His gospel of love?

My affections! where are ye?—My love! art thou with the woman who was a sinner, to whom much had been forgiven, and who loved much; standing at His feet, behind Him, weeping, bathing His feet with tears, wiping them with the hairs of thy head; kissing His feet, and anointing them with that sweet ointment of the heart which He approves? Art thou with Mary, standing without at the sepulchre weeping? Oh! if thou art, Jesus Himself shall meet thee there, and ask thee, *Why weepest thou?*

REV. C. NEALE.



February 21st.

'And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?'—GEN. iii. 9.

THE voice of Jehovah was to Adam an intimation only of displeasure—the gospel brings to his posterity glad tidings of great joy: he was summoned from his hiding-place to reckoning and to judgment—they are allured from theirs by the covenant of reconciliation: the former had nothing to hope for in meeting with God—the latter

are assured, on the faithfulness of divine declaration, that they have nothing to fear, if they will only meet Him on the ground of the Redeemer's righteousness. And why, then, should they be so reluctant to forsake their refuge of lies? Why cleave to a hiding-place against which the fierce anger of the Lord must one day go forth to burn up and consume?

REV. DR. GORDON.



February 22d.

'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.'—

MATT. v. 4.

To you who are in trouble, there are some particular promises in the word of God made in a most special manner, which should never have been yours, if you had had your portion in this life as others. Take them to you; claim your right, and be not robbed. God taketh nothing from you, but that which He is to supply with His own presence.

I persuade myself that this world is to you an uncouth inn; and that you are like a traveller who hath his bundle upon his back, and his staff in his hand, and his feet upon the door threshold. Go forward in the strength of your Lord (let the world abide at home, and keep the house), with your face toward Him who longeth more for a sight of you than you can do for Him; ere it be long He will see us. I hope to see you laugh as cheerfully after noon, as you have mourned before noon. The hand of the Lord be with you in your journey! What have you here? This is not your mountain of rest. Arise, then, and set your foot up the mountain; go up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the shoulder of your beloved. If you knew the welcome that abideth you when you come home, you would hasten your pace; for you shall see your Lord put up His own holy hand to your face, and wipe all tears from your eyes; and I think then you shall have some joy of heart.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, 1645.

February 23d.

'Unless Thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction.'—Ps. cxix. 92.

No Israelite could stand in the temple of God, and, in the solemn act of offering, say, 'A Syrian was my father, ready to perish,' without being impressed with recollections of his own perishing condition; what he had seen, when he walked through the sea by his father's side, or was borne on his shoulder,—when he assisted in gathering the evening and morning portion,—when he drank the water from the rock,—and when desolating judgments upon offenders impressed terror on his mind. Who but has been ready to perish? There are seasons in every one's life, marked with too much distress, ever to be entirely obliterated from memory. 'Unless,' said one, 'Thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction.' And the Christian is ready to add, Unless grace had met my guilt, and mercy relieved my wants, I should have perished. Does it not recall to the reader, periods of affliction, sin, and wrath, when his own condition, as perilous, was attended with feelings of despondency, and it seemed inevitable that he must perish? Oh! should this meet the eye of one who, in his own apprehension, is ready to perish, let him contemplate the unspeakable love of Christ, the infinite merit of His atonement, and the unconditional promise of His grace; and, with Hezekiah, he will soon have to declare, The Lord was ready to save me!

SEATON.

February 24th.

'For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.'—ROM. viii. 6.

A SPIRITUAL man is a character that rises far above all worldly wisdom and science. He is described by our Lord as *born of the Spirit*. Spiritual senses are given to

him. He has a spiritual TASTE, that rejects whatever is impious, and gladly receives whatever is salutary in the spiritual life. He *desires the sincere milk of the word, that he may grow thereby.* He has a spiritual SIGHT. He *looks, not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.* He SMELLS a sweet savour in the things of God. *His name is as ointment poured forth.* He has a quick FEELING, and he has a spiritual EAR. *My sheep hear my voice.* He lives in a world of his own : he is tried by spiritual conflicts, and supported by spiritual comforts. If the things of God do not afford him consolation, he droops, and nothing in this world can lift up his head ; he will say to every other object, *Miserable comforters are ye all.* He is pursuing a spiritual end ; and while others boast and are puffed up with their attainments, he is humbled in the dust, and gives all glory to God.

REV. R. CECIL.



February 25th.

'My Beloved.'—CANT. ii. 8.

THIS was a golden name, which the ancient Church, in her most joyous moments, was wont to give to the anointed of the Lord. When the time of the singing of birds was come, and the voice of the turtle was heard in her land, her love-note was sweeter than either, as she sung, 'My beloved is mine, and I am His ; He feedeth among the lilies.' Ever in her Song of Songs doth she call him by that delightful name, 'My Beloved.' Even in the long winter, when idolatry had withered the garden of the Lord, her prophets found space to lay aside the burden of the Lord for a little season, and to say, as Esaias did, 'Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.' Though the saints had never seen His face, though as yet He was not made flesh, nor yet had dwelt among us, nor had man beheld His glory ; yet He was the consolation of Israel, the hope and joy of all the chosen, the beloved of our

soul ; and we feel that He is very precious, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.

C. H. SPURGEON.

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February 26th.

'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.'—ROM. ix. 16.

NONE can make a Christian but He that made the world ; it is the glory of God to bring good out of evil ; whom He loveth, He loveth unto the end. Though all men seek more or less to recommend themselves to God's favour by their works, yet to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness ; the blood of the Redeemer applied to the soul by His Spirit, is the one thing needful. Prayer is the task and labour of a Pharisee, but the privilege and delight of a Christian. God grants not the request of His people because they pray, but they pray because He deigns to answer their petitions ; self-righteousness and legal holiness rather keep the soul from, than show it to Christ ; they who seek salvation by them, pursue shadows, mistake the great end of the law, and err from the way, the truth, and the life. God's design is to glorify His Son alone, and debase the excellence of every creature ; no righteousness, besides the righteousness of Christ Jesus (that is, the righteousness of God), is of any avail towards acceptance.

REV. J. HART.

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February 27th.

'Believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly.'—ROM. iv. 5.

IT is not the righteous and godly man that Christ came to call, justify, and save, but the sinful and ungodly man. So that if you were a righteous and godly man, you were neither capable of calling, justifying, or saving

by Christ ; but being a sinful and ungodly man, I will be bold to say unto you, as the people said to blind Bartimeus, 'Be of good comfort ; arise, He calleth thee,' and will justify and save thee. Go, then, unto Him, I beseech you ; and if He come and meet you (as His manner is), then do not unadvisedly say, with Peter, 'Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man,' but say, in plain terms, 'O come unto me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord ;' yea, go further, and say, as Luther bids you, 'Most gracious Christ, I am a poor miserable sinner, and therefore do judge myself unworthy of Thy grace ; but yet, having learned from Thy word that Thy salvation belongeth to such a one, therefore I come unto Thee to claim that right which, through Thy gracious promise, belongeth to me.' Assure yourself that Jesus Christ requires no portion with His spouse ; no, verily, He requires nothing with her but mere poverty ; the rich He sends empty away, but the poor are by Him enriched.

MARROW OF MODERN DIVINITY.



February 28th.

'Take therefore no thought for the morrow ; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'—MATT. vi. 34.

LIVE thou to-day ; be it thy earnest care to improve the present hour ; this is your own, and it is your all. The past is as nothing, as though it had never been. The future is nothing to you,—it is not yours, perhaps it never will be. Therefore live to-day, lose not an hour ; use this moment, for it is your portion. Enjoy the *very, very* NOW, by enjoying Him 'whose years fail not.' Now let thine eye be singly fixed on Him 'in whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning.' Now give Him thy heart. Now stay thyself on Him ; now be thou holy, as He is holy. Now lay hold of the blessed opportunity of obeying His blessed and perfect will. Now rejoice to suffer the loss of all things, so that thou mayest win

Christ. Gladly suffer to-day for His name's sake, whatsoever He permits this day to come upon thee. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' Take, therefore, just as much as He gives thee to-day ; to-day do and suffer His will. To-day give up thyself, thy body, soul, and spirit to God, through Christ Jesus, desiring nothing but that God may be glorified in all thou art, all thou dost, and all thou sufferest ; seeking nothing but to know God, and His Son Jesus Christ, through the Eternal Spirit ; pursuing nothing but to love Him, to serve Him, and to enjoy Him at this hour, and to all eternity.

REV. JOHN WESLEY.



March 1st.

'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'—

MARK ii. 17.

LET no man look for sanctification before he is justified, that is, let no man be discouraged from coming to Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, that disposition of heart which he desires to have. We must be first in Christ before we are new creatures. And this is a common fault among us ; we would fain have something before we come ; we think God's pardons are not free, but we must bring something in our hand. You know the proclamation runs thus : Buy without money, that is, come without any excellency at all, because we are commanded to come and take of the water of life freely. Therefore do not say, I have a sinful disposition, and a hard heart, and cannot mourn for sins as I should ; therefore I will stay till that be done. The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away, that this very deadness of thy spirit may be removed ; that thou mayst be enlivened, quickened, healed ; that thou mayst hate sin : for He is thy physician ; look not for it beforehand ; thou must first be in Christ before thou canst be a new creature.

REV. DR. PRESTON.

March 20.

'In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'—JER. xxiii. 6.

SHALL we tell men that, unless they be holy, they must not believe on Jesus Christ; that they must not venture on Christ for salvation, till they be qualified and fit to be received and welcomed by Him? This were to forbear preaching the gospel at all, or to forbid all men to believe on Christ. For never was any man qualified for Christ. He is well qualified for us; 1 Cor. i. 30. But a sinner out of Christ hath no qualifications for Christ, but sin and misery. Whence should he have any better, but from and in Christ? Shall we warn people that they should not believe on Christ so soon? Is it possible that they should do it too soon? 1 John iii. 13. Can a man obey the great gospel command too soon? or do the work of God too soon? A man may too soon think he is in Christ, and that he is, when he is not so indeed. And this we frequently teach. But that is only an idle dream, not faith. A man may too soon fancy that he hath faith; but, I hope, he cannot act faith too soon. If any should say a man may be holy too soon, how would that saying be reflected on? And yet it is certain, that though no man can be holy too soon, yet he may, and many do, set about the study of that he counts holiness too soon, that is, before the tree be changed, before he have the new heart; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27; and the Spirit of God dwelling in him, which is only got by faith in Christ. And, therefore, all this man's studying of holiness is not only vain labour, but acting of sin. And if this study and these endeavours be managed, as commonly they are, to obtain justification before God, they are the more wicked works still.

REV. R. TRAIL.

March 3d.

'Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him as He is.'—1 JOHN iii. 2.

COME, Lord Jesus, let me see Thee as Thou art. Come and make me like unto Thee. I do love Thee; I am now happy in Thy love, but not so as I hope to be. I am often interrupted here, and never love Thee as I desire; but these blessed spirits standing now round the throne are perfected in love. Oh that I was once admitted to see, as they do, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ! Is not that the voice of my Beloved which I hear answering, Surely I come quickly? Amen, say I; even so come, Lord Jesus. Make haste, my beloved, and be Thou like to a young roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices. Are not these, believer, the breathings of thy soul? Since the time for them is short, may they grow warmer and more affectionate every day! Thou wilt wait but a little while before thou shalt see the King in His perfect beauty, and thou shalt be a blessed partaker of His eternal glory. REV. W. ROMAINE.



March 4th.

'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.'—Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

AS far as I am able to discern my heart and ways, I have chosen the Lord for my portion; I take up my rest in Him, and not in the creature. To love, and fear, and admire, and bless Him, and to have communion with Him, is my chief joy; and the eternal vision and fruition of God is my great hope. I would not only have God hereafter, but here in this world, for my chief good. He is even far better than all the world. I come to God by Jesus Christ; and as I believe in God, I believe also in Christ, and rejoice and glory in Him; and acknowledging

my own sinfulness and unworthiness, I rest entirely on Him as the ground of my justification and acceptance with God.

REV. J. CORBET.



March 5th.

'The Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.'—
REV. xxi. 10.

'BEFORE the mountains were brought forth,' He formed the stupendous plan of His heavenly house. It was the work, the masterpiece of His heavenly skill; and it contains treasures of wisdom and knowledge which angels cannot explore, nor eternity unfold. The directions given for the Jewish temple were minute; but in this more glorious edifice nothing was overlooked. 'It was ordered in all things, and sure.' In those eternal counsels of which human folly may speak, but concerning which human wisdom can form not one faint conception, all that concerns the salvation of the Church was for ever established. The means of carrying it into execution; the time when its great Author should be revealed; the sinners who should attain its blessedness; the station they should each occupy below, and the place they should fill above; the instruments by which they should be turned to God; the afflictions which should subdue, and the consolations which should refine them; 'the work of faith and the labour of love' which they should perform: all were fixed by the 'determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,' and never have they known alteration, or seen the shadow of a change.

REV. C. BRADLEY.



March 6th.

'And He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.'—LUKE ix. 23.

THERE is a certain pleasure and sweetness in the cross to them who have their senses exercised to discern

and to find it out. There is a certain sweetness in one's seeing himself upon his trials for heaven, and standing candidate for glory ; there is a pleasure in travelling over these mountains, where the Christian can see the prints of Christ's own feet, and the footsteps of the flock who have been there before him. How pleasant is it to a saint, in the exercise of grace, to see how a good God crosseth his corrupt inclinations, and prevents his folly ! Of a truth, there is a paradise within this thorn hedge. Many a time the people of God are in bonds, which are never loosed till they be bound with cords of affliction. God takes them and throws them into a fiery furnace that burns off their bonds. And then, like the three children, Dan. iii. 25, they are loose, walking in the midst of the fire. God gives His children a portion, with one bitter ingredient ; if that will not work upon them, He will put in a second, and so on, as there is need, that they may work together for their good ; with cross winds He hastens them to their harbour.

REV. T. BOSTON.



March 7th.

' I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.'—Ps. cxvi. 13.

O CHRISTIAN ! you have been highly favoured of the Lord. He has taken from your hand the cup of trembling, and given you the cup of salvation ; your privileges are of the highest order, of the greatest value. Redemption from the vilest slavery ! deliverance from the plagues of hell ! adoption into the family of God ! union and communion with the Lord Jesus ! the joy of the Holy Ghost ! the bright hope of eternal glory ! Ought not every feature to glow with smiles of complacency, and every heart-string to vibrate with emotions of gratitude ? Ought not your mouth to be filled with His praise and His honour all the day long ? Oh ! let Christ be magnified by you, both in life and death. Let the rest of your time be devoted to the will of God. Let the word of God dwell *in you richly*.

Be diligent ; add to your faith, virtue ; to virtue, knowledge ; and to knowledge, temperance ; and to temperance, patience ; and to patience, godliness ; and to godliness, brotherly kindness ; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

REV. J. THORNTON.

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March 8th.

'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.'—JOHN xii. 24.

How sweet and lovely is this similitude of the Lord's, in allusion to Himself ! See to it, my soul, that thou art able to receive it. Thou hast been attending thy Lord to the tomb ; here behold the blessed fruits of His precious death. When Jesus became incarnate, like a pure corn of the finest wheat, He fell to the ground ; and when at His death He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death, He fell into the ground ; and now, what an abundant harvest of glory to God, and salvation to souls, hath that death and grave of Jesus produced ! Had Jesus never died, how would He have seen His seed, and the pleasure of the Lord prosper in His hand ! Had Jesus not descended to the grave, how would He have been the life-giving, the soul-quickenings root of all His Church and people ! But now, by this one precious corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, how hath the garner of God been filled, and is now continually filling, with His seed !

REV. DR. HAWKER.

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March 9th.

'Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.'—JOHN xiv. 6.

O THOU who art the living and life-giving Word itself, through whom and for whom all the written word was given, come and possess my soul ! I long for nothing, and I would always long for nothing, but for Thy wisdom

and Thee. O forgive my unsettled heart, which has so often been taken up with a multitude of unprofitable things, instead of being wholly fixed upon Thee, who art the only way, the truth, and the life ! I can have no rest, no firm establishment, but here alone. My nature is unstable as water ; and I live, moreover, in a slippery world. Leave, O leave me, therefore, not to myself, nor to the power of the evils which are above, beneath, and on every side. Set me upon Thyself, my blessed Rock, and order Thou my going in the way, and lead me into the way everlasting. Who is sufficient for these things, but Thou who art all-sufficient ? How can I, so poor a creature, hope either to stand or to prevail, but through that strength which is made perfect in weakness, through that wisdom which cannot be deceived by fraud, and that love which is stronger than death, and durable as the days of heaven ! O Lord, be on my side, and then neither my own flesh, nor the corruption of the flesh in others, no, nor all the powers of darkness, shall be able in the least to hurt me.

A. SERLE, ESQ.



March 10th.

'After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.'—REV. vii. 9.

IF emblems can assist you, then do you join in your imagination the emblems and pictures of heaven. What is the condition of its people ? That of crowned kings. What is their enjoyment ? That of conquerors triumphant, with palms of victory in their hands. What their haunts ? The green pastures by the living waters. What their employment ? Losing their spirits in the ecstasies of melody, making music upon their harps to the Lord God Almighty and to the Lamb for ever and ever. For guidance—the Lamb, that is in the midst of them, shall lead them by rivers of living waters, and shall wipe away

all tears from their eyes. For knowledge—they shall be like unto God ; for they shall know even as they are known. For vision and understanding—they shall see face to face, needing no intervention of language or of sign. For ordinances (through which the soul makes imperfect way to her Maker)—there is no temple in the city of their habitation, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof. There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

REV. E. IRVING.

March 11th.

‘ And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.—LUKE i. 47.

MARY’S joy is great in itself, but it is joy in the great Lord God. There is no joy to men so high, so pure, so holy as this ; not joy merely from the Lord, but joy in the Lord ; and as there is none so pure, so there is none so full and so exultant.

My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour ; it hath rejoiced, and doth rejoice with a joy the greatest that language can utter. Mary’s word for rejoicing is what is elsewhere translated, being exceeding glad. It is greater than can be expressed in words, for, believing in Him, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is the human spirit filled with joy by the Lord’s great goodness ; then filled with joy by the Holy Ghost occupying the soul ; and then plunged besides into an ocean of joy, deep and wide, even into the joy of God Himself, and, into God as the soul’s joy, the spirit exulting in the Lord.

This joyful experience of Mary is not only lawful for us, but is expressly and strongly enjoined on every believer in Jesus by the lips of Paul : Rejoice in the Lord alway ; and again I say, Rejoice. Phil. iv. 4.

REV. A. MOODY STUART.

March 12th.

'They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.'—Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

GREAT peace have they who live by the faith of the Son of God, and who love God's law. Nothing shall offend them, whatever may be their lot, and whatever may be the department of duty or the course of discipline selected for them. The peace of God rules in their hearts, amidst all the vicissitudes of this uncertain world; and they go from strength to strength, while they anticipate, with faith and confidence, the blessedness and the security of an eternal world. If they shall remain long in this world, they believe and know that God is with them. If 'the time of their departure is at hand,' they are as firmly persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ that they shall be with God. 'The God of hope fills them with all joy and peace in believing; and they labour in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.' He will not forsake the work of His hands, nor will He suffer them to be tempted or afflicted above what they are able to bear.

REV. SIR H. MONCREIFF.

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March 13th.

'Jesus wept.'—JOHN xi. 35.

O MOST blessed mourner, with whose tears thy Saviour mingles His own! O sympathy most unparalleled! To each of the two mourners the Lord addressed the consolation that was most congenial. To Martha He gave exceeding great and precious assurances, in words such as never man spake. To Mary He communicated the groanings of His Spirit, in language more impressive to the heart than all spoken words. With Martha, Jesus discoursed and reasoned; with Mary, Jesus wept. O what a friend is this! what a brother, yea, and far more than a brother! and how confidently may you come to

Him, ye Christian mourners, in every season of trial! For surely He will give you the very cordial, the very refreshment of which you stand in need. He is a patient hearer if you have anything to say to Him, and He will speak to you as you are able to bear it. Your complaints, your regrets, your expostulations, your very remonstrance almost, and upbraidings, may all be expressed to Him. He will pity, He will comfort. His Holy Spirit will bring to your remembrance what Christ has said suitable to your case; He will recall to you the Saviour's gracious words of eternal life, and suggest to you considerations fitted to dissipate your gloom, and put a new song in your mouth. And even if you cannot collect your thoughts and order your words aright,—if you are dumb with silence when your sorrow is stirred, and as you muse, your heart is hot within you,—oh! remember that with these very groanings which cannot be uttered, the Spirit maketh intercession for you.

REV. DR. CANDLISH.

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March 14th.

'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.'—Ps. cxxvi. 5.

THERE is an obvious and important difference between the Christian's present and his future state. Here he is engaged in a ceaseless round of fatiguing employments; there 'he rests from his labours, and his works follow him.' Here he is exposed to numberless inconveniences from the hostile disposition of the men of the world; there 'the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.' Here he is constantly contending with his spiritual adversaries,—'without are fightings, and within are fears;' there all is internal peace and external security. Here he puts on the helmet, and assumes the shield; there he wears the garland, and holds the palm of victory. Here he wanders along the wild of life, a pilgrim and a sojourner; there he dwells for ever in the house of his Father. Here he has 'no continuing city;'

there he has 'a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' Here his adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; there Satan is bruised under his feet. Here he 'sees through a glass darkly;' there 'he sees face to face.' Here 'he knows in part;' there 'he knows even as he is known.' Here 'he walks by faith, and not by sight;' there 'he sees God's face in righteousness, and is satisfied with His likeness.' Here he hopes; there he enjoys. Here he fights; there he triumphs. Here he prays; there he praises. Here he weeps; there God wipes away all tears from his eyes. Here he dies; there he lives for ever. There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

REV. DR. J. BROWN.

March 15th.

'Your life is hid with Christ in God.'—COL. iii. 3.

OUR Lord handleth us as fathers do their young children; they lay up jewels in a place above the reach of the short arm of children, else children would put up their hands and take them down, and lose them soon. So hath our Lord done with our spiritual life. Jesus Christ is the high coffer in the which our Lord hath hid our life! We children are not able to reach up our arms so high as to take down that life and lose it. It is in our Christ's hand. Oh! long, long may Jesus be Lord keeper of our life! And happy are those who can, with the apostle, lay their soul in the hand of Jesus; for He is able to keep that which is committed to Him against that day.

I cannot tell you what is then to come, yet I may speak as our Lord doth of it. The foundation of the city is pure gold, clear as crystal; the twelve gates are set with precious stones. If orchards and rivers commend a soil on earth, there is a Paradise there, wherein groweth

the tree of life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits every month, which is seven score and four harvests in the year ; and there is there a pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb ; and the city hath no need of the light of the sun or moon, or of a candle, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof.—Believe and hope for this till you see and enjoy.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

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March 16th.

'Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.'—COL. iii. 5.

'MORTIFY, therefore, your members that are on the earth ;' be always doing it whilst you live in this world. It is true, great ground is obtained when the work is vigorously and constantly carried on. Sin is much weakened, so that the soul presseth towards perfection ; but yet the work must be endless, I mean, whilst we are in this world. If we give over, we shall quickly see this enemy exerting itself with new strength and vigour. It may be under some great affliction, it may be in some eminent enjoyment of God, in the sense of the sweetness of blessed communion with Christ, we have been ready to say, that there was an end of sin, that it was dead and gone for ever. But have we not found the contrary by experience ? Hath it not manifested, that it was only retired into some unsearchable recesses of the heart, as to its inbeing and nature, though it may be greatly weakened in its power ? Let us, then, reckon on it, that there is no way to have our work done but by always doing of it ; and he who dies fighting in this warfare, dies assuredly a conqueror.

REV. DR. OWEN.

March 17th.

'If any man do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.'—JOHN vii. 17.

A HUMBLE admission of the light we already have, is the most effectual way to a full conviction of the truth of the doctrine of Christ. If any man do His will, he shall know of His doctrine whether it be of God. If we honour God as far as we know His will, He will honour us with further discoveries of it. Thus shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord, and thus shall we become assured that there is salvation in no other name than that of Jesus Christ; and thus, from an inward experience of the quickening influences of His Holy Spirit, you will join the admiring Church, and say of Jesus, 'This is my beloved, this is my friend; He is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.' Rejoice in Christ Jesus; and appear as a living witness that He is faithful who hath said, 'Seek, and ye shall find; ask, and receive, that your joy may be full.'

REV. S. PEARCE.

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March 18th.

'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you.'—JOHN xvi. 22.

TRUE joy is the gift of God—is a grace of the Spirit of God. It has God for its author, and God for its object; and it has this prerogative annexed to it, that no one can destroy this gift of grace. The Lord Christ declares, that He will not suffer any creature to take away what He bestows. What a rich cordial was this to His dejected apostles! They were mourning on account of His leaving them, and were sadly cast down, as men without hope; but He revives their drooping spirits with a promise, 'I will see you again, and your joy no man taketh from you.' This is indeed strong consolation; for it is one of the

streams which maketh glad the city of our God—a stream that never fails ; it runs out of the ocean of free grace, and none can stop its running back into it.

REV. W. ROMAINE.



March 19th.

‘It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.’—1 COR. xv. 43.

‘THE body,’ says the apostle, ‘is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.’ When sown or committed to the dust, it bears the revolting marks of that degradation and infamy to which God’s displeasure against sin had doomed it ; it is stripped of all that excited admiration and love, and has grown so loathsome and offensive, that even the fondest friends are compelled to carry it away from the dwelling which it once delighted with its presence, and bury it up in the base earth, as unfit for the light of day. But when raised again, it shall be so transformed, as not to have a single vestige, nor the faintest trace of its former debasement. It will be so beautiful, and so covered with splendour, as unspeakably to exceed all that is splendid and beautiful upon earth ; and it will not dazzle the eyes that behold it, only because they are the eyes of holy angels and of glorified saints.

‘The body,’ says the apostle, ‘is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.’ When sown or committed to the dust, it is so impotent that the feeblest of creatures may insult it with impunity ; the very worms of the earth make it their unresisting prey ; and, though once proud of its strength, boasting largely of its dominion, it is now incapable of making a single effort against its meanest foes. But when raised again, it will be endowed with a potency which it never knew before ; all its faculties will be matured and perfected in vigour ; its whole frame will be supported and pervaded by a power that equally exceeds our experience and our calculation—a power that will be adequate to the contemplation of the loftiest objects—a

power that will not rest day or night in those services which immortals perform in the upper sanctuary—a power that will range untired through an immense of wonders, and feel it neither difficult nor tiresome to gather those fruits of knowledge, and purity, and joy, which crowd upon it as it advances in its mighty career—a power that will be able to bear, without fainting and without fatigue, the burden of ‘an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’

REV. DR. THOMSON.

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March 20th.

‘Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’—ROM. v. 1.

CHERISH clear, deep, solid, unfading views of the Saviour’s work,—a work so perfect, that the sinner can neither add nor take away from it,—a work which ensures peace to the guilty—pardon to the offending—light to the blind—life to the dead. Beware of dishonouring Christ by doubting of His power or willingness to save, because you feel yourself unworthy, sinful, and weak. Faith honours Him by believing. ‘What must I do?’ cried the jailor; ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,’ was Paul’s reply. Salvation is wholly of faith from first to last. This is the grand discriminating principle between true scriptural evangelical religion, and all mere imitations or assumptions of that title. Our paradox is, that weakness is strength. The soul that by faith, through grace, is saved without works, obtains an inward principle of love which *must work, cannot but work, and actually does work*. First, God loved us; secondly, thence we obtain faith to trust Him; thirdly, we are thus saved; fourthly, we *therefore* love Him who first loved us; fifthly, this love produces good thoughts, words, and works, as *the fruits*, not *the root*, of our salvation. Thus is He the author and finisher of our faith, and the author of salvation to all them that obey Him. He has promised to all, as well as to David, to perfect that which concerneth His

people ; whom He loveth, He loveth to the end : trust Him, therefore, evermore. Such is the Christian's doctrinal, practical, and experimental creed.

REV. L. RICHMOND.

March 21st.

'And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them ; and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.'—REV. xxi. 3.

THE saints in heaven shall have the glorious presence of God and of the Lamb. There they are brought near to the throne of the great King, and stand before Him, where He shows His unconceivable glory ! There they have the tabernacle of God on which the cloud of glory rests, the all-glorious human nature of Christ, wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwells, not veiled as in the days of His humiliation, but shining through that blessed flesh (that all the saints may behold His glory), and making that body more glorious than a thousand suns : so that the city has no need of the sun, nor of the moon ; but 'the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof' (properly the candle thereof) ; the Lamb is the luminary or luminous body which gives light to the city, as the sun and moon now give light to the world, or as a candle lightens a dark room ; and the light proceeding from that glorious luminary for the city, is the glory of God. Some time that candle burned very dim ; it was hid under a bushel in the time of His humiliation, but now and then it darted out some rays of this light, which dazzled the eyes of the spectators ; but now it is set on high in the city of God, where it shines, and shall shine for ever, in perfection and glory. It was sometimes laid aside, as a stone disallowed of the builders ; but now it is, and for ever will be, the light or luminary of that city ; and that like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal.

REV. T. BOSTON.

March 22nd.

'And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver ; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.'—MAL. iii. 3.

THE refiner of silver requires patient and long waiting to make the silver fine, and to bring it to its highest point of perfection. In the operation, He not only places His crucible on the fire, but heaps fire around and upon it. Under this process it at first throws out a dark and offensive smoke, which, as the heat and its effect increase, becomes less offensive, until it altogether ceases, and the silver becomes transparent, and beautifully white ; and the point of requisite perfection and purity is when the refiner *sees his own likeness reflected in the pot*. It would be idle to point out how admirably this account of the process of refining silver illustrates the gracious process by which, through means of affliction, our heavenly Father carries on the work of purification in the heart of His children.

ANON.

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March 23d.

'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.'—PS. xxiii. 4.

THE faithful, indeed, have still to pass through 'the valley of the shadow of death ;' but with this remarkable difference, that now they need fear no evil. It is the semblance of power which death retains, rather than the reality. The terror is removed. The eternal separation from God and goodness is to be dreaded no longer. Its consequences, the eternity of woe which sin deserved, are prevented, repealed, annihilated. To die now is only to sleep in Jesus, in order to awake to joy and felicity ; it is now only to put off a garment of disgrace, to be clothed upon with robes of triumph ; it is only to pass a narrow defile, that we may reach an eternal home ; it is only to

leave behind us the bonds and fetters by which the soul was imprisoned, that we may walk at liberty in the presence of God, and in the assembly of the just made perfect.

REV. D. WILSON.



March 24th.

'And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.'—1 JOHN ii. 19.

OUR earnest longings after a full and perfect enjoyment of God, and so our breathings after an immortal state, do not depend upon our assurance ; but, indeed, assurance rather depends upon that. I doubt we are commonly mistaken in the nature of assurance, and, it may be, are in a wrong manner curious about the signs of Christ appearing in our souls ; for certainly a well-grounded assurance of the love of God doth most discover and unfold itself in the growth of true godliness in the soul. Now the love of God, and an earnest desire to be like unto Him, and to be with Him, is the better half of all religion ; so that it rather seems that assurance springs up from this frame of soul, than that this arises out of assurance. If assurance be the thing that you desire, get your souls joined to God in a union of affections, will, and ends ; and then labour and long to be closer to Him, like to Him, perfectly holy and happy in Him, and be assured that Christ is in you of a truth ; for these mighty works which He hath wrought, these divine breathings, these holy pantings after Him, do bear witness of Him.

REV. S. SHAW.



March 25th.

'Thou art fairer than the children of men ; grace is poured into thy lips : therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.'—Ps. xlv. 2.

READER ! art thou a believer in Christ ? Dost thou see in Him, and in its highest degree, everything that is lovely ? and art thou growing and abounding in love to

Him? If this be thy present happiness, thou wilt find many powerful motives to increase it in the 45th and 72d Psalms. Read, then, and see whether thou canst mix faith with what is said of them in the incarnate God, as to conclude with David, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee.' If thy heart be thus enamoured with this love, then hast thou got a key to the book of Canticles, for thou art the spouse of Christ. Mayest thou experience what is therein said of the glories of thy heavenly Bridegroom, and mayest thou grow in love to His adorable person, by finding continual tokens of His love to thy soul in the several offices which He sustains for the dispensing of His favours! In these offices He is always endearing Himself to His people. REV. W. ROMAINE.



March 26th.

'The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.'—REV. iv. 10, 11.

It has been asked, Why the son of a king should go mourning all the day? Why, because, unlike a king's son, he will not lay hold of the privileges of the kingdom. They are treasured up in his King, and Priest, and Lord, and Saviour, and Redeemer united, but he will not put forth his hand to take them. What does the apostle say? 'Fight the good fight of faith: lay hold on eternal life; endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ.' Press by faith *nearer* and *nearer* to Him who, the more clearly He is seen, shines in fuller glory and more perfect beauty. His rays cast so bright a light, that when Love, the child of Faith, would press too near, her twin sister Humility pauses at His footstool, and, casting her crown before Him, unites with the assembled host around His throne in saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive glory, and honour, and blessing.' REV. J. H. STEWART.

March 27th.

'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'—I JOHN ii. 15.

O YOU that dote upon this world, for what victory do ye fight? Your hopes can be bound with no greater reward than the world can give; and what is the world but a brittle thing full of dangers, wherein we travel from lesser to greater perils? Oh, let all her vain, light, momentary glory perish with herself, and let us be conversant with more eternal things! Alas! this world is miserable: life is short, and death is sure.

My life is a frail life, a corruptible life, a life which, the more it increaseth, the more it decreaseth; the further it goeth, the nearer it cometh to death; a deceitful life, and like a shadow full of the snares of death. Now I rejoice, now I languish; now I flourish, now infirm; now I live, and straight I die; now I seem happy, now miserable; now I laugh, now I weep: thus all things are subject to mutability—nothing continueth an hour in one estate. O joy above joy, exceeding all joy, without which there is no joy,—when shall I enter into thee, that I may see my God that dwelleth in thee?

ST. AUGUSTINE.

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March 28th.

'And Enoch walked with God.'—GEN. v. 22.

LET us diligently strive to walk with God; and let our souls be so influenced and trained that we may both rightly apprehend Him, and always acknowledge His presence, not without holy fear, and an earnest desire of the divine approbation. Let us appropriate Him to ourselves by a lively faith; let us hold converse with Him daily; let us consult Him in all our difficulties, and make earnest application to Him in all our necessities; let us securely rely on His providence; let us gratefully re-

collect all His mercies ; let us enjoy Him alone in all good things ; let us exercise ourselves in the pious practice of a holy obedience, as well with respect to those sacred solemnities which have a more immediate relation to His worship, as with respect to the duties incumbent on us in our particular callings, carefully avoiding whatsoever may in any measure displease Him, and immediately endeavouring, by a speedy repentance, to recover His favour, which, by our manifold sins, we had worthily deserved to lose. Let us sincerely refer ourselves and all our actions to His glory ; let us surrender up ourselves and all we have to Him ; let us never cease from earnestly seeking a more full enjoyment of Him ; yea, and let us walk with Him alone, rejecting with scorn and disdain the fellowship of the world. Let us move on with Him, not loitering or wandering out of the way ; and, lastly, let us walk with the God of our salvation cheerfully, constantly, and with perseverance. And then Enoch's motion will at length assuredly happily conduct us to Enoch's rest, even to eternal glory.

BISHOP HALL.



March 29th.

'Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.'—DEUT. viii. 3.

GOD could have made the wilderness a fruitful field, where Israel might have sowed and reaped ; but this would have been unsuitable to their circumstances. They were constantly removing from place to place, and therefore God was pleased to feed them with manna. At a certain time they went out and gathered it. When the sun waxed hot, it melted, and all around them was barrenness and desolation. They could lay up nothing for the morrow, and on the Sabbath this supply was withdrawn. All this was calculated to humble them,—to lead them, from past experience of God's goodness, to hope, and quietly to wait for the supply of their wants.

Thus did God teach them that man liveth not by bread alone. He called them to consider His power and sovereignty, who supports His creatures in whatever way He pleases. We are usually supported by bread ; it is the staff of life. The human body was made of the dust of the ground, and it is preserved by what springs from the earth. We are therefore apt to think that bread is essential to our preservation ; but in this we err, not knowing the power of God. He can support us in any way which seems good in His sight ; and this lesson He taught Israel, by feeding them with what had never before been the food of man.

Thus the Lord not only showed His sovereignty in maintaining human life, but intimated that the true Israel possesses a nobler life, for the support of which He has provided food different from that by which our natural life is sustained.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

March 30th.

'Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed.'—ISA. xlv. 24.

IT adds to our joy, that as God hath appointed the Saviour to this work, so He hath accepted Him in it. He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We see Him risen, ascended, gone to glory; clothed with the highest honours, and wearing every mark of God's acceptance and approbation. How will God disown that righteousness in His people, which He hath already put such an honour upon in the person of their Surety and Saviour! And as there is a way appointed in which we may receive it, and be interested in it, shall we not apply it, and look after an interest in it in that way? Receive it by faith, receive the atonement, and bid the Redeemer and His righteousness welcome! O my soul! this nearly concerns thee. Hast thou an interest in this righteousness? 'Tis an all-sufficient righteousness, a divine appointment for pardon

and acceptance with God as such. Hast thou received it, and dost thou by humble faith rest all thy hopes upon it?

REV. W. RAWLIN.

March 31st.

'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.'—
Ps. cxix. 105.

EVERY consideration that regards our well-being in time, or our happiness in eternity, enforces upon us the study of the Bible. Are we immortal creatures? There alone life and immortality are brought clearly to light. Are we exposed to endless toils and trials? There alone do we find hope to sweeten all our toils, and encouragement to sustain all our trials. Are we exposed to manifold temptations? There we are clothed with the armour that will enable us to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and led to Him by whom our hands will be strengthened to war, and our fingers instructed to fight. Are we condemned creatures? There are we led to the blood that cleanseth from all sin, and taught how we may have peace with God. Are we depraved creatures? There we are led to the fountain where sin and uncleanness are washed away, and taught how we may become new creatures in *Jesus Christ*. In short, in whatever situation we may be placed, in whatever relation we may stand, whatever we may be called upon to do or to endure, the spirit that we have to cultivate, the duties that we have to perform, and the temptations against which we have to guard, will be found there, and there alone.

REV. MARCUS DODS.

April 1st.

'The resurrection and the life.'—JOHN xi. 25.

THESE are Thy magnificent titles, Captain of our salvation! and therefore we commit to Thee body and

soul; for Thou hast redeemed both, and Thou wilt advance both to the noblest and most splendid of portions. Who quails and shrinks, seared by the despotism of death? Who amongst you fears the dashings of those cold dark waters, which roll between us and the promised land? Men and brethren, grasp your own privileges. Men and brethren, Christ Jesus has 'abolished death.' Will ye, by your faithlessness, throw strength into the skeleton, and give back empire to the dethroned and destroyed? Yes, 'the resurrection and the life' 'abolished death.' Ye must indeed die, and so far death remains undestroyed. But if the terrible be destroyed when it can no longer terrify, and if the injurious be destroyed when it can no longer injure; if the enemy be abolished when it does the work of a friend, and if the tyrant be abolished when performing the offices of a servant; if the repulsive be destroyed when we can welcome it, and if the odious be destroyed when we can embrace it; if the quicksand be abolished when we can walk and sink not; if the fire be abolished when we can pass through it and be scorched not; if the poison be abolished when we can drink it and be hurt not; then is death destroyed, then is death abolished, to all who believe on 'the resurrection and the life;' and the noble prophecy is fulfilled (bear witness, ye groups of the ransomed, bending down from your high citadel of triumph), 'O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction!'

REV. H. MELVILLE.

April 2d.

'I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind.'—ROM. vii. 23.

I FIND to this day seven abominations in my heart :—
 1. Inclination to unbelief. 2. Suddenly to forget the love that Christ manifesteth. 3. A leaning to the works of the law. 4. Wandering and coldness in prayer. 5. To forget to watch for that I pray for. 6. Apt to murmur

because I have no more, and ready to abuse what I have. 7. I can do none of those things which God commands me, but my own corruptions will thrust in themselves, and thus, when I would do good, evil is present with me.—These things I continually see and feel, and am afflicted and oppressed with, yet the wisdom of God doth order them for my good :—1. They make me abhor myself. 2. They keep me from trusting my heart. 3. They convince me of the inefficacy of all inherent righteousness. 4. They show me the necessity of flying to Jesus. 5. They press me to pray to God. 6. They show me the need I have to watch and be sober. 7. And provoke me to pray to God through Christ.—O help me, and carry me through this world! Of all fears, they are the best that are made by the blood of Christ; and of all joy, that is the sweetest that is mixed with mourning over Christ. Oh! it is a goodly thing to be on our knees, with Christ in our arms, before God. I hope I know something of these things.

JOHN BUNYAN.

April 30.

‘And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.’
ROM. viii. 28.

FEAR not to follow Jesus fully, closely, wholly. Look always to Him. Lean fully upon His arm: His strength never faileth. Trust confidently in Him: He never betrays. Be glad and rejoice in Him; in Him salvation is complete. He will watch you with His eye, defend you with His arm, counsel you with His Spirit, cheer your pilgrimage here, and enlarge your bliss hereafter, by His everlasting presence. The hairs of your head are all numbered. All the events of your life, the darkest and the brightest, are but so many coloured threads woven by the Saviour’s hand into the web of your life, according to a pattern arranged in His own mind, in which *His own* glory and your happiness are blended together; and for the perfection of the pattern, every event, of whatever

character, every alternation of health and sickness, disappointment and success, joy and sorrow, is but as a thread of the right colour inserted exactly in the right place.

ANON.

April 4th.

'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'—

LUKE ii. 49.

O MY soul! thou hast not to look for thy Saviour in the grave; not to look for Him in the inferior world. He is not here personally, for He is risen, as He said. He is here, however, spiritually. Were I to content myself with anything which this inferior world contains, I would be seeking the life, and the strength, and the comfort of my soul, where they are not to be found. He is not here. But where is He? He is exactly where the glory of God, where the safety and the comfort of His people, require Him to be. He could say to His mother, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' And He has not yet given it up. He is about His Father's business and ours, and attending continually to our interest. Let me then look away from this inferior world, and all that it contains. It has some few enjoyments for my body, but has nothing, nothing for my soul. It is neither my rest, nor is it the source of my enjoyments. With my Saviour is treasured up, however, the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Enable me, O God, to set my affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at Thy right hand.

REV. W. DUNN.

April 5th.

'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'—LUKE ii. 29, 30.

THE death of believers is a retreat, a departure to be at home with Christ. Death in this view is so far from

filling us with dread, that it is rather an object which we earnestly desire. When the soul leaves the body, it puts off its garment—it forsakes its habitation or tabernacle. A believer, satisfied to quit this cottage in the desert, this house of clay, subject to so many inconveniences, frequently half ruined before it falls to pieces, retires voluntarily and with a good grace. Does it please the Lord that we should live? Let us live to Him, for Christ will be our gain even in this life; yet let us be constantly desirous of being where He is. If it be His pleasure that we should die, let us die,—let us die joyfully, persuaded that He will provide without our care, both for the necessities of the Church, and for the concerns of our families, and that *it is* for us *far better to depart and to be with Christ* (Phil. i. 29). What therefore ought we to do? We should prefer death, and to be with Christ, infinitely before the present life.

Ah! could we, like Simeon, carry our Saviour, not in our arms, but really in our hearts; could we possess Him; did He dwell in our hearts by faith; did He live in us, and we in Him; then, O Death! how welcome wouldest thou be!

EXTRACTS FROM FOREIGN DIVINES.

April 6th.

'The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.'—GAL. ii. 20.

MANY sinners despair, and are unhappy, and distracted, and miserable, because they believe on others beside Jesus. Cruel physicians tell them: You must not think to be saved merely by believing in Christ; you must live a good life, and keep the commandments, before you can be healed. And deluded souls believe it true; and so, while they are looking after righteousness and salvation by the works of the law, they are always in bondage and are not healed. Oh that God may give you to make Jesus Christ the object of your faith, and believe none

other can do you good ; believe no good work can be done, neither will you be anything the better, but worse and worse, till you trust your souls in the Lord Jesus Christ's arms, and fly for refuge, redemption, and deliverance, only to His precious blood ! Oh ! strive for this faith which was once delivered to the saints. Rest not, but follow after Jesus, and cease not to cry, Lord, help my unbelief ! till you can say with joy (the Holy Ghost bearing you witness in your conscience), ' I believe ; yea, the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.'

REV. J. CENNICK.

April 7th.

' I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me : now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.'—GEN. xxxi. 13.

THE believer in the atonement may regard the character of God under the softest images of tenderness and peace, and can rejoice that at His throne he hath no condemnation to fear, and that in His darkest cloud there is no bolt to destroy. Such contemplations have excited the liveliest gratitude to Him who submitted to be made a curse for us ; and with such sacred feelings may your hearts now glow to the generous Mediator between God and man. And it becomes you to cherish fervid gratitude to that God who devoted the Son of His love to suffer and die to save you from destruction. This love is infinite ; this gift is unspeakable ; and they claim our everlasting wonder and praise. Such were the views which Jacob had at Bethel, and such are the objects which are more fully presented to you on the cross. Now God says to you, ' I am the God of Calvary, where Jesus suffered for your sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring you to God ;' and let your faith and love, your gratitude and joy, now reply, ' O Lord, I will praise Thee : though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is

turned away, and Thou comfortest me ! Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid.'

REV. DR. BELFRAGE.

April 8th.

'There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.'—

HEB. iv. 9.

REST ! how sweet the sound ! it is melody to my ears ! it lies as a reviving cordial at my heart, and from thence sends forth lively spirits, which beat through all the pulses of my soul ! Rest ! not as the stone that rests on the earth, nor as the flesh shall rest in the grave, nor such a rest as the carnal world desires. O blessed rest ! where we 'rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty !' where we shall rest from sin, but not from worship ; from suffering and sorrow, but not from joy. O blessed day ! when I shall rest in the bosom of my Lord ! when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising ; when my perfect soul and body shall together perfectly enjoy the most perfect God ! when God, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me, and rest in His love to me, as I rest in my love to Him ; and rejoice over me with joy, and joy over me with singing, as I shall rejoice in Him !

REV. R. BAXTER.

April 9th.

'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world !'—JOHN i. 29.

SINNER, hast thou been thoughtless, careless, hardened ? Still, still I say to thee, Behold the Lamb of God ! This is the Lamb of God's providing, and there is no other. This is the Lamb which God Himself did put to death. This is the Lamb which taketh sin away. For whom was that Lamb slain ? *For sinners such as thou art.* This is the great truth of the gospel ; it is this

which opens the door of hope to the hopeless. This holds out the olive branch of peace to poor, wretched, guilty man. This is God's broad proclamation, and the salvation which we preach. Jesus died for sinners, for sinners as sinners; for the poor, the ruined, the lost. He casts out none who come to Him. His is a free welcome to all who believe in Him.

Art thou at the point of death? Still may thine eye be directed to that sacred spot, which in times thou didst find the pleasantest and the best. May that Jesus who loved thee and gave Himself for thee—that Jesus who so loved thee, be thy joy and thy solace then;—while under the teaching of His Spirit thou mayest be led to repose thy soul upon His unchanging love. 'Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for *Thou* art with me.

REV. J. H. EVANS.

April 10th.

'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail.'—HEB. vi. 19.

AN anchor has a double use; it prevents the ship from being driven by the wind and tide, and it is also employed to move her from one place to another. The hope of the gospel, which is here compared to an anchor, answers both purposes. 1st, It prevents the Christian from being led away by the snares and temptations to which he is exposed in this evil world. The happiness which he enjoys in communion with God, the joyful prospect of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading, renders the pleasures of sin hateful in his eyes; hence it is written, Every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure, 1 John iii. 3. 2d, It leads him to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It animates him in running the Christian race; and the more lively his hope, the more does he lay aside every weight. Under its influence his soul follows hard after God, and his path

is as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day. Thus is he drawn with cords of a man, with bands of love; he hastens unto the coming of the day of God, and rejoices in the assurance that he shall be satisfied when he awakes in Christ's likeness. 1 John iii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 49.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

April 11th.

'Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'—Ps. xlii. 11.

MOURNFUL disciple of Christ, comfort yourself with these words. This is His commandment to the stewards of His mysteries: 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her *iniquity is pardoned*.'

Believe me, the heaviness under which the child of God is occasionally seen to labour, arises from his *forgetfulness of these things*. The words of 2 Pet. i. 2-9 directly imply that '*peace is multiplied* to believers, *through the knowledge* of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord.' And if any one lacketh this or any other of the fruits of the Spirit, it is because 'he is blind, and cannot see afar off, and *hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*.' 'Peace on earth, and goodwill towards men,' is the very essence of the gospel message; and the good tidings of great joy is forgotten, when they to whom it is sent *continue in heaviness*. REV. C. LANE.

April 12th.

'But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.'—1 COR. xv. 57.

DOWN to the grave, then, Christian reader, you must go; but have faith in Jesus, for He has the keys of the unseen world, and will keep safely what is committed to

Him through the dark valley you have to pass ; but Jesus your friend lives to guide and protect and comfort you. Into an unseen world your spirit shall enter, but Jesus is there ; and absent from the body, you shall be present with the Lord. And Jesus is to come again and bring His own with Him, and then shall be the harvest of which His rising from the dead was the first-fruits. We lie down every night and sleep without fear, yet we have no certainty of awaking to the light of the morrow. But we lie down in the grave in the certainty of awaking to a brighter day. And when we awake we shall be satisfied with His likeness whose image we are to wear ; we shall be like Jesus, for we shall see Him as He is.

With Him we shall dwell under the new heaven and on the new earth, and in the New Jerusalem. The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He will dwell with us ; and we shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with us, and be our God.

REV. MAXWELL NICHOLSON.

April 13th.

‘When I am weak, then am I strong.’—2 COR. xii. 10.

IF sufferings for Christ abound, our consolations by Christ abound so much more ; insomuch that the apostle could say, ‘Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecution, in distresses, for Christ’s sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong.’ And many afflicted saints have thought and said so too. When deep called unto deep, and all God’s waves and His billows threatened to go over them, they betook themselves to Christ ; and there, as in an ark, they were safe and comfortable. The true believer can see this and the other comfort taken from him, or so embittered that he can take no pleasure in them ; yet with Christ in his arms, he can smile and sing, ‘I have all, and abound ;’ and whilst he stands on the embers of the burnt world, he clasps his hands, and with exultation cries, ‘I have lost nothing.’

REV. S. LAVINGTON.

April 14th.

'And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.'—REV. xiv. 13.

THE believer rejoices in the prospect of death, which he welcomes as the messenger of peace to introduce him into that glorious land, where he shall immediately behold the great God who hath redeemed him ; Jesus who died for him on the cross, and hath been his Mediator through life ; the Spirit who hath sanctified, preserved, and enlightened him, and who shall now dwell fully in him ; angels who excel in strength, and praise God continually ; departed friends who are waiting to embrace him, and to renew that kind intercourse which death for a short time suspended. Sin is now completely subdued,—all sorrow is now at an end,—his trials and afflictions are finished,—and he is made perfect in holiness and felicity. It is death which introduces into this happy state. He beholds its approach with that degree of interest and agitation which the mind must feel in the prospect of quitting for ever this life, and entering on a new and unseen state. But he beholds it without dismay, without fear or apprehension. He lifts up his head with eagerness, because his redemption draweth nigh. If he feels, it is for his friends, and not for himself ; but he commits them to God—to that God whose protection he hath himself experienced, and who is able to comfort those who mourn. Bright as the throne of the Lamb is conceived to be, and dear as departed friends are who thus adore before it, He who sits on the throne, Jesus the Son of God, is the object of attraction.

J. BURNS, M.D.

April 15th.

'Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?'—2 PET. iii. 11.

WHILE everything within us and around us reminds

us of the approach of death, and concurs to teach us that this is not our rest, let us hasten our preparations for another state, and earnestly implore that grace which alone can put a period to that fatal war which our desires have too long waged with our destiny. When these move in the same direction, and that which the will of Heaven renders unavoidable shall become our choice, all things will be ours ; life will be divested of its vanity, and death disarmed of its terrors. Everything around us, in the course of a few years, is so changed, that did not the stability of the material form a contrast to the fluctuations of the moral and political world, we might be tempted to suppose we had been removed to another state, or that all those things that have happened were but the illusions of fancy and the visions of the night. How consoling at that season to look up to that Being, *who is a very present help in trouble, the dwelling-place of all generations*, who changeth all things, and is Himself unchanged !

Let us still feel and acknowledge our absolute dependence on God with humble and contrite hearts, and with filial confidence and affection. Let us fly to His arms, that thus we may enjoy the united supports of reason and religion, and every principle, human and divine, may concur to assure us of our safety.

REV. R. HALL.

April 16th.

'And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.'—EX. x. 21.

FROM whence does darkness of soul, even darkness that may be felt, usually originate? Never from any changeableness in our covenant God, the glory of whose unvarying faithfulness and love shine the same, and can suffer no eclipse. It is when the world, with its fascinating honours, or wealth, or pleasures, gets between our sins and us, that the light of His countenance is obstructed, and our rejoicing in Him suffers a temporary eclipse.

The sin-rising corruptions of a regenerated heart dim the prospect of salvation, and damp the fervour of inherent grace. Nothing can again brighten the former, and bring the latter into lively exercise, but the splendour of God's repeated rising in the soul. Happy it is for benighted people, that as mists and clouds may seem to obscure the sun, but cannot extinguish him, nor hinder the access of his rays beyond a certain time, so faithful in mercy is God, that He will shine away our fears, and perfectly conform us to the image of His holiness.

REV. A. TOPLADY.

April 17th.

'And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.'—COL. iii. 15.

IF what happens to us be not good, yet it worketh for our good; it contributeth to our good, because it is in His skilful hand who can bring good out of evil, peace out of trouble. Oh that men were persuaded to be Christians indeed,—to love the law of God, to trust in Him! Great peace have all such. This will prove to you their peace in the world. Your peace should be as a river for abundance and perpetuity; no draught could draw it up. It should run in time as a large river; and when time is done, it would embosom itself in eternity, in that ocean of eternal peace and joy in which the saints above for ever delight. Other men's peace is like a brook, which in summer dries up.

REV. H. BINNING.

April 18th.

'But Thou art the same, and Thy years fail not.'—HEB. i. 12.

WHAT a poor shelter is everything but Christ! To see the delusion and dying nature of all earthly comforts, it should wean our hearts from them. What are they all

but vanities and shadows? They are alluring to our senses, and we earnestly covet them, and for a time enjoy them with pleasure and delight; but they soon vanish, and then we lie down in sorrow. But in Christ Jesus we find a safe shelter and a durable felicity. He is the only rock, the Rock of Ages, which endureth for ever. He is to us like 'the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,'—a shadow which yields a complete defence from the burning heat by day, and from the storms by night. 'Our Rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges.' In Him we find all we want, all we enjoy, and that for ever. Nothing withers here; no worm at the root of our defences and supplies, but all are covenant blessings,—a covenant ordered in all things, and sure. Let us then act the wise part, and make God our refuge, and take shelter under the wings of mercy, and not under the shadow of withering gourds. It is better to trust in the living Lord, than to put confidence in the dying things of earth. Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord. See the immense difference between the God of salvation and all things else; 'they all shall perish, but He endureth.'

REV. T. JONES.

April 19th.

'By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.'—HEB. xi. 7.

OBSERVE the principles that wrought in Noah to the building of the ark. *Flesh and blood furnished none of them*, grace supplied them all, so that, although it was a work done in the flesh, it was not done by the flesh,—hence the flesh had nothing to boast of. First, there was faith, then out of this sprang holy fear, then zeal, then patience, then fortitude, and hope, and charity; the whole life of faith was put in motion towards this object, so that it may be truly said, he lived and walked with God in this task, and exemplified herein the 'work of faith, and

labour of love, and patience of hope, in the sight of God and the Father.' But go and ask this servant of God whose is the honour of this work, and who, in fact, was the true builder of the ark? Do you think Noah will take this honour to himself? 'I laboured more abundantly than they all,' he may indeed say, 'yet,' will he add, 'yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.' That which is done by the force of gracious principle,—that which the word of God operates in and by us through faith,—is not done by us, but by Christ in us. 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'

REV. D. C. MAITLAND.

April 20th.

'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'—REV. v. 12.

THIS is one of the songs of heaven, and every chord in the celestial choir responds to this song. There is not one discordant note; all is love, and unison, and delight in praising the Lamb. He is the source and spring-head of wisdom, and, like the sun, which imparts its rays and beams of light and heat to all the world, so, if any man lack wisdom, he has only to ask it of Jesus, who will bestow it liberally; the same of His riches, for they are unsearchable; and of His power, for all power was given Him in heaven and in earth,—power to subdue Satan, take away sin, and conquer death; and of His strength, for of Him and by Him were all things created, and His strength is made perfect in the weakness of those who trust in Him; and of His honour, for Jehovah has said, All men shall honour the Son as they honour the Father; and of His glory—peculiar glory flows to Christ from the songs of the redeemed; they are gems in His crown, for 'they shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels, saith the Lord;' and they are to Him 'a crown of glory, and a royal diadem.'

REV. DR. MARSH.

April 21st.

'Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.'—EX. xxiii. 20.

CHRIST takes charge of His people from the moment that they enter on their journey and their warfare, and never leaves them, nor forsakes them, till He has conducted them through the dangers of the way, and brought them victoriously to their rest in glory. Three things are specified in the text: He goes before them, keeps them in the way, and brings them to the place which He has prepared for them. There is not any part of the path in which they have to walk which He has not already trod. Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also took part of the same. He became a man, and a man of sorrows too. He has known poverty, weariness, hunger, temptation, conflict, pain, shame, and death; so that His followers cannot be brought into any trial in which He has not been before them, and from which He will not know how to extricate them. Having suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. He goes before them as their guide, and the captain of their salvation, with the experience of a leader who knows every part of their journey, and the dangers and enemies which they will have to encounter; and who, partaking of their nature, and having tasted their sufferings, can have a feeling of their infirmities.

REV. J. FAWCETT.

 April 22d.

'And from thence He arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it; but He could not be hid.'—MARK vii. 24.

FAITH findeth Christ out when He is hid. Isa. xiv. 15: 'Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself.' Faith seeth God under a mask, and through a cloud; and therefore

faith addeth, O God of Israel, the Saviour ! Thou hidest Thyself, O God, from Israel, but Israel findeth Thee. Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. God casteth a cloud of anger about Himself, He maketh darkness His pavilion, and will not look out ; yet Job seeth God, and findeth Him out : ' Yet in my flesh shall I see God.' Reason, sense, nay, angels, seeing Christ between two thieves, dying, and going out of this world, bleeding to death, naked, forsaken of friend and lover, they may wonder and say, ' O Lord, what dost Thou here ?' Yet the faith of the thief found Him there as a king who had the keys of paradise, and he said in faith, ' Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.' Faith seeth Him as a witness and a recorder in heaven.

REV. S. RUTHERFORD.

April 23d.

' Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me : for Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.'—JOHN xvii. 24.

WHILE the saints are in this world, there are great remains of sin and darkness, to separate or disunite them from Christ, which shall in heaven all be removed. This is not a time for that full acquaintance, and those glorious manifestations of love, which Christ designs for His people hereafter, which seems to be signified by Christ's speech to Mary Magdalene, when ready to embrace Him, when she met Him after the resurrection. ' Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not ; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.'

When the saints shall see Christ's glory and exaltation in heaven, it will indeed possess their hearts with the greater admiration and adoring respect, but will not awe them into any separation, but will serve only to heighten their surprise and joy, when they find Christ condescending to admit them to such intimate access, and so freely and fully communicating Himself to them. So that, if

we choose Christ for our friend and portion, we shall hereafter be so received by Him, that there shall be nothing to hinder the fullest enjoyment to the satisfying the utmost desires of the soul. There shall never be any end of this happiness, or anything to interrupt our enjoyment of it, or in the least to molest us in it.

REV. J. EDWARDS.



April 24th.

'O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?'—ROM. vii. 24.

I CONFESS myself a sinner still ; though I am not much tempted to outward gross acts of iniquity, yet inward corruptions and spiritual wickedness continually harass and perplex my soul, and often make me cry out, 'O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of sin and death ?' From me they are not yet removed, though I once hoped, with many others, that I should soon get rid of them. All I can do is to look to Jesus through them all ; cling fast to His wounded side ; long to be clothed with His righteousness : pray Him to plead my cause against these spiritual enemies that rise up against me ; and, though I feel myself leprous from head to foot, believe that I am clean through the word which He hath spoken unto me. In short, I rejoice, not because the spirits are always subject to me,—for, alas ! I find they are often too strong for me to control,—but because my name is written in heaven.

REV. J. HART.



April 25th.

'Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous : nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.'—HEB. xii. 11.

Do you repine at your trials ? Reflect, I beseech you, upon the ingratitude implied in your murmuring. God

has deprived you of one blessing, but leaves you in possession of many. Shall memory of His goodness be obliterated, and all obligation to thankfulness be cancelled, by a single instance of severity? Reflect upon the impiety of your conduct. It is not man, but God, against whom you utter your complaints. Yes, you open your lips to accuse Him, whose name should never be mentioned but with reverence and love; and whose dispensations, although censured by you, are adored and celebrated by the inhabitants of heaven. 'Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints.' You charge *Him* with injustice, who can do no wrong; you say that He has robbed you, while He only resumed what He had lent you for a time. Reflect upon your audacity,—with whom do you presume to find fault? against whom do you lift your feeble voice? Is it not against that awful Being, in a contest with whom no man can hope to prevail? Ah! beware of challenging the Omnipotent to arms, lest you be 'consumed by the blow of His hand.' Murmurs for the loss of one comfort would be justly followed by the loss of all.

REV. DR. DICK.



April 26th.

'He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.'—ISA. liii. 11.

How secure is the believer's happiness! Surely the Judge will not condemn those for whom He died, for so He would punish Himself in punishing them. Will He lose the travail of His own soul, by condemning His people? This can never be; for He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. How good is it to get more knowledge of Christ! They are most likely to have boldness and comfort in the day of judgment, who shall see *Him* upon a throne, with whom they have often had sweet communion in the family and in the sanctuary.

The terror of the future judgment should engage Christians to do all they can to convince and persuade sinners not to neglect the great salvation, but to seek God to enable them to fly to Christ for refuge. What objects of compassion are ignorant unbelieving men! Should not Christians do their utmost to pluck them as brands out of the burning?

REV. J. HURRION.

April 27th.

'In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'—Ps. xvi. 11.

OH! were all the sons and daughters of affliction fervent in their supplications for that Spirit whose prerogative it is to glorify Jesus, and who alone can enlighten the darkened understanding, soften the hard heart, bend the stubborn will, purify the polluted soul, and constrain the before careless despisers of His grace gratefully to listen to the voice of a Saviour-God, beseeching them to come to Him for that deliverance from eternal wrath and woe, for that rest and that salvation which He has purchased for His people with His own most precious blood,—then indeed might we hope soon to see a glorious change pass over the now desolated aspect of this vale of tears; for then, in answer to the humble and contrite hearts, this blessed Spirit would abundantly pour down the refreshing showers of His grace, by whose fertilizing influence the waste and solitary places of this earth would become as the garden of the Lord, and its wilderness would rejoice and blossom as the rose; joy and gladness would be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Oh! were this glorious change wrought upon earth, were a Saviour's love enthroned in every heart, a Saviour's image stamped upon every spirit, His peace reigning in every soul, and His praise thrilling on every tongue; would not earth be then indeed a very type and antepast of heaven?—that glorious world of unclouded light and everlasting love, where, in the presence of a

Saviour-God, there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand pleasures for evermore; where all its inhabitants supremely love, and are like Him, for they see Him as He is.

REV. H. WHITE.

April 28th.

'There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'—ROM. viii. 1.

To those who are in Christ, to whom there is no condemnation, whose life is a life of faith upon the Son of God, and whose supreme desire it is, living or dying, to be the Lord's—it is a matter of comparatively trivial moment *when* or *how* their death may come. The wishes of Christians on this subject have been various and opposite, some professing their preference of a sudden and others of a more lingering dissolution; the former captivated with the thought of an instantaneous transition, the other shrinking from so immediate a call, and desiring rather a premonition of their departure, and leisure for reflection and anticipation. 'Our times are in God's hand.' Instead of indulging such wishes at all, it is best to be *always* ready, like servants that wait for their lord, that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open to Him immediately; that whether our departure shall be sudden or slow, we may thus leave upon the minds of our surviving relations and friends a pleasing and settled confidence, that 'to us to die has been gain.'

REV. DR. WARDLAW.

April 29th.

'And Abraham fell on his face: and God talked with him.'—GEN. xvii. 3.

ABRAHAM teaches us the right way of conversing with God; 'and Abraham fell on his face: and God talked

with him.' When we plead with Him, our faces should be in the dust ; we shall not then speak lightly of Him, nor complain ; nor will there be any more boasting, we shall abase ourselves before God. The Christian's secret intercourse with God will make itself manifest to the world. We may not see the husbandman cast the seed into the ground ; yet when the corn grows and ripens, we know that it was sown. The mere professor, who may be found everywhere but in his secret chamber, may think that with care he shall pass for a good Christian ; but he mistakes, for the spirit will discover itself of what sort it is. He who would walk safely and honourably, must walk closely with God in secret.

REV. R. CECIL.

April 30th.

'God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.'—I JOHN iv. 16.]

THE love of God especially constitutes heaven,—the full exercise of our love to Him in all the power of our being, and the intuition of His love to us, flowing on toward us, without limit and without end. The sun is but a faint emblem of the Deity, confined as it is to a spot, and extending its influence only over the immediately surrounding matter ; but to dwell in the midst of the illimitable uncreated Sun, and to be penetrated by His creative rays, is the happiness of all the children of God.

If they turn their eyes to the creatures, the reflected radiance shows God still present ; but it is the excellence of the creatures to reflect His excellence who made them. As God everywhere exists, so they are conscious of His existence everywhere,—His glory rests upon every creature,—His presence dwells in every thought.

But that glory rests with peculiar mildness on the face of the Saviour,—on Him who is perfect God and perfect man,—the Creator and the example of all worlds, with

whom the Father is ever well pleased. In heaven, the blessed behold Him dwelling in God, and God in Him ; and as Christ is one with God, so are the believers one with Him,—partakers through Him of the divine nature, and fellow-heirs of that kingdom, the excellence of which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

J. DOUGLAS, ESQ.



May 1st.

' For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.'—CANT. ii. 11, 12.

THE images here used are peculiarly pleasing. By enumerating the tokens of the return of spring, the bridegroom invites his bride to come forth and enjoy in his company the beauties of the season. In every age, God had a people to whom He manifested Himself in a way He does not to the world ; but now believers enjoy what many kings and prophets only saw in the distance, and vainly desired to attain. The Church of Christ was then in its minority, and was placed under tutors and governors. The worldly elements to which it was then subject cramped its energies, but she has now entered on a more glorious state. Her children are now called to exult in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. The clouds, the blackness, darkness, and tempest of Sinai, are over and gone ; the voice of words which quailed the stoutest heart, is heard no more ; God reveals Himself in the still small voice of the gospel of Christ. The veil no more excludes the believer from entering the holiest of all. He appears in the presence of God by his glorious representative, and through Him he has at all times access with confidence to the throne of grace. From the consideration of his high privileges, Christ encourages him to press after the more close and intimate communion with God. His language is, O taste and see that the Lord is good ; blessed is the man that

trusteth in Him. As one whose citizenship is in heaven, he is called to seek the things that are above ; to trample on whatever would obstruct his progress ; to enjoy, in fellowship with the Father and with His Son, the blessedness which is the pledge and earnest of that glory into which Christ has entered as our forerunner.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

May 2d.

'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.'—CANT. viii. 14.

WHEN the silver cords of life loosen apace,—when the last pins of the earthly tabernacle are taken out,—when the lips of the expiring saint turn pale, and the blush forsakes his cheek, and what little breath he draws returns cold,—and the hovering soul is just on the wing for glory ;—fast as the world darkens upon his sight,—he brightens into the perfect image of God, and kindles into more than an angel light. Jehovah visits him with smiles of everlasting love ; Jesus beckons him to regions of eternal day ; the blessed Spirit of God wafts him with a gentle gale over the stream of death. The angelic potentates deem it an honour to usher the ransomed soul, and convey the precious freight. Disembodied saints, who were landed long before, throng the blissful coast to congratulate the new-born seraph on his safe arrival. When a believer lands in glory, the whole church triumphant may be supposed to welcome the new admitted peer. Under such comfortable anticipations of the glory that shall be revealed when faith pierces within the veil, whither Jesus our forerunner is gone before, the believer cries out, O how amiable is even this distant prospect of Thy dwelling, Thou Lord of hosts ! When shall we receive the end of our faith, even the full salvation of our souls ? How long, O Lord, holy and true ? Why tarry the wheels of Thy chariot ?

REV. A. TOPLADY.

May 3d.

'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.'—ISA. xliii. 25.

CONSIDERING only the present life, is there not an incalculable advantage in belonging to Jesus, and in receiving salvation from Him alone! What anxiety, what doubt of the favour and reconciliation of God, what disquiet concerning her lot in the world or the dispensations of futurity, can molest an enlightened soul supported by her Redeemer, and directed by His counsels? What misfortune, what contradiction can cast her down? She suffers the evils incident to humanity, but she knows her Saviour is preparing for her a peaceable repose; she passes through a valley of gloom and sorrow, which she waters with her tears; but she beholds at its extremity the dawning of another day: she is bowed beneath the weight of her cross, but it is with Jesus that she bears it; and when He gives her the signal to withdraw from beyond the light cloud that death raises over the boundary which separates time from eternity, she sees the orient brightening from on high; and, on the border of that gulf which swallows up all generations, at sight of which the heart of the worldling sinks within him, she sings with transport the hymn of life.

REV. DR. MALAN.

May 4th.

'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.'—DEUT. xxxiii. 25.

THE Christian life has a close connection with our keeping fast hold of the covenant of promise. It is neither a constant nor a continued summer with our earth: yet we are sure, even in the coldest frost, and in the longest nights of winter, that the spring and summer will return, because God hath made a covenant con-

cerning their succession. Even so in the Christian life, it is very usual for the heirs of salvation to be in sorrow and in fear, and in great bondage, to have cold and dark winter nights; but when the saints live and walk in character,—when they live and walk by faith,—they rest their foot upon the stable rock of Jehovah's promise, and smile for joy in the pleasant assurance, that His word will be made good to them at last; and in the meantime, that their strength shall be at least proportioned to their day of trial.

REV. A. HALL.

May 5th.

'Pray one for another.'—JAS. v. 16.

WHO can say what are not, or shall not, be the happy effects, immediate or remote, of our prayers 'one for another'? Can I remember critical points in my own history, or have such been disclosed to me in the history of others, when either bodily danger has been imminent, or other and greater perils have impended; when the mind, the character, has been on a gulf, drawn on by a pernicious allurements, entangled in a hidden snare, oppressed with trials hardly to be borne, urged towards the edge of a frightful desperation? And who can tell that the prayer of a departed parent, long since uttered and recorded, or the tender intercession of a friend far away, was not the chosen invisible thread which, in the hands of a gracious Providence, held us back from ruin? Who knows that it was not declared by Him, to whom all power in heaven and in earth is given, or by some rejoicing minister of His compassion? The prayers of my servant, to whom thou wast and art so dear, come up as a memorial on thy behalf. Those secret supplications are the instrument by which the fulfilment of my merciful purpose is procured. In remembrance of them, I rescue thee from this destruction.

J. SHEPHERD, ESQ.

May 6th.

'Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not His hand, nor the day when He delivered them from the enemy.'—Ps. lxxviii. 41, 42.

THOU art placed in the midst of a trying world ; limit Him not. Infinite Wisdom hath placed thee there, and Infinite Power is sufficient for thee. Thou tellest me thy body is weak ; limit Him not. Thou tellest me thy spirits are weak ; limit Him not. Thou tellest me thy faith is weak ; limit Him not. Thou tellest me providential dealings seem against thee ; limit Him not, He can make 'the rough place plain : ' He can 'make the crooked place straight : ' He can make the bitter waters sweet : He can cause thee to sing the louder song for these very trials : He can cause thee to tune thy harp the more to His praise, because thou shalt sing of 'the brother born for adversity.'

But is this all I would counsel thee, dear reader, in ? Far from it. Oh ! be not contented with 'not limiting ; ' pray for that faith that expecteth great things. 'Open thy mouth wide.' God has opened His heart wide ; His covenant is opened wide—'Yet there is room,'—all fulness in Christ ; 'open thy mouth wide.' Oh for more spirituality ! My soul thirsteth for God, 'as the heart panteth after the water brooks ! ' Expect much of that God that gave His Son. What can He withhold ? Look into thy circumstances, look into thy situation ; look for the holy wisdom, that can make thee to turn thy very hindrances into encouragements, and thy very trials into blessings.

REV. J. H. EVANS.

May 7th.

'He shall dwell on high ; his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks ; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.'—ISA. xxxiii. 16.

THE righteous seem to lie by, in the bosom of the earth, as a wary pilot in some well-sheltered creek, till

all the storms which infest this lower world are blown over. Here they enjoy safe anchorage, are in no danger of foundering amidst the waves of prevailing iniquity, or of being *shipwrecked* on the rocks of any powerful temptation. But ere long we shall behold them hoisting their flag of hope, riding before a sweet gale of atoning merit and redeeming love, till they make, with all the sails of an assured faith, the blessed port of eternal life.

REV. J. HERVEY.

May 8th.

'Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace : thereby good shall come unto thee.'—JOB xxi. 22.

BY acquaintance with God, *eternal good shall come unto thee*. From one heaven you shall go to another, a better, a brighter, a purer, the perfection of that in which you have lived on earth. Here, your highest bliss was to love and serve your Lord ; and there, your love shall be perfected, and your service uninterrupted. Lodged in the ark, you shall ride out safely every storm of life ; and when the rain ceases to fall, and the winds to roar, this ark shall safely convey you to the haven of rest, and thence shall you ascend to the hill of Zion, the mountain of the Lord's house, the celestial heights of that wealthy place. You shall then have done with this mortal life. You shall have done with mortal cares ; you shall lay aside the membranes which impeded your progress, as a traveller takes off his heavy garments when he finishes his journey. You shall have done with sin. Your inbred adversary, which has interrupted every duty, and marred every pleasure, which has caused clouds of sorrow to gather in your heart, and drop like rain from your eyes, shall be not only subdued, but destroyed. Standing upon the banks of the heavenly Canaan, you shall sing the song of Moses, over sin and all its associates : 'The enemies which I have seen this day, and which have

followed me all my life, I shall see no more for ever.' O yes! those sweet words *for ever* shall be attached to everything in glory.

REV. J. SHERMAN.

May 9th.

'Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.'—MATT. xvi. 17.

GOD had revealed to Peter that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and whoever believes this 'is born of God.' Christians well know that there is nothing in or about them to entitle them to this unspeakable honour and blessing. They ascribe all to sovereign grace, free, unmerited favour. Being now partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel, and their life being hid with Him in God, they are become ONE with Christ. This is the foundation on which they rest for eternity, and they are well assured that no other foundation can any man lay. So far from imagining that they have received remission of sins on account of any change in them, or of works performed by them, they know that their repentance and good works, in whatever measure they may be, are the effects and fruits of the Holy Spirit, communicated through faith.

Christians, look to Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour, to whom all power in heaven and in earth is committed, who, '*being in the form of God*, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and *took upon Him the form of a servant*.' Beholding Him in this twofold capacity, as uniting the divine and human natures, God manifest in the flesh, they see Him in every respect qualified to be that complete Saviour which their case requires. In the language of Thomas, they unite in saying, 'MY LORD AND MY GOD.'

R. HALDANE, ESQ.

May 10th.

'And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you : come thou with us, and we will do thee good ; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.'—NUM. x. 29.

AS Moses, when on his journey through the wilderness, following the pillar of cloud and fire, invited Hobab to go with him and his people to Canaan, to partake with them in the good that God had promised them ; so do those of your friends and acquaintance invite you out of a land of darkness and wickedness, where they have formerly been with you, to go with them to the heavenly Canaan. The company of saints, the true Church of Christ, invite you. The lovely bride calls you to the marriage supper. She hath authority to invite guests to her own wedding ; and you ought to look on her invitation and desire as the call of Christ the Bridegroom, for it is the voice of the Spirit in her (Rev. xxii. 17). So that you are invited on all hands—all conspire to call you. God the Father invites you. This is the King that has made a marriage for His Son ; and He sends forth His servants, the ministers of the gospel, to invite the guests. And the Son Himself invites you. It is He that speaks, Rev. xxii. 17, 'And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him come.' He tells us who He is, in the foregoing verse : 'I Jesus, the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.'

REV. J. EDWARDS.

May 11th.

'The sun shall be no more thy light by day ; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee ; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.'—ISA. lx. 19.

READER, art thou in the way that leads to this glory ? If not, may the Lord be merciful unto thee, and bring

thee unto it. If thou art seeking to be set right in it, remember Jesus is *THE WAY*. May His good Spirit enable thee to believe in His word, and to trust in it, till thou attain to the salvation of thy soul.

If thou art in the way, and hast communion with the Father, through faith in the atonement of His Son, art thou maintaining it in thy daily walk, and improving it in every duty? and art thou going on thy way rejoicing in God? If thou art sorrowing for outward crosses, or bewildered with inward conflicts, cannot thou nevertheless find joy and peace in believing? Dost thou march on victorious in thy warfare, keeping up communion with God, against all opposition of thy spiritual enemies? And is thy faith established upon the faithfulness of God, that He will carry on His own work in thee unto the day of the Lord Jesus? In this faith art thou now living? and in this hope dost thou hope to die? Has God indeed done these wonders for thee? Oh! bless Him then with me, and let us magnify His name together.

REV. W. ROMAINE.

May 12th.

'And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry and will deliver you.'—ISA. xlv. 4.

- SOME of God's converted people are soon matured for glory, by their nearness to, and intimate communion with, the Sun of Righteousness. These are frequently known to outrun their brethren, and, like John at the tomb of our Lord, to reach the sepulchre, finish their course, and ascend to their Master's joy at a very early period; while other saints, who either do not ripen so fast, or who have a larger field of usefulness to occupy on earth, are detained from their crown until they are full of years and good works. Each of these is gathered as a shock of corn in its season. O believer, if thy God summon thee away betimes, His Spirit will first perfect

that which concerneth thee ; nor will Providence apply the sickle until grace has made thee white for the harvest ; or if He lengthens thy thread, having much for thee to do, and much to suffer, He will show Himself the God of thy old age, and not forsake thee when thou art grey-headed ; for He hath inviolably declared, ' Even to your old age I am He ; and even to hoar hairs I will carry you ; I have made, and I will bear ; even I will carry, and I will deliver you.' Remember, to thy great and endless comfort, that

His every word of grace is strong
As that which built the skies ;
The voice that rolls the stars along
Spake all the promises.

REV. A. TOPLADY.

May 13th.

' Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. —2 JOHN 8.

THERE are three expressions in the Scriptures which would greatly improve us by thinking them over. They are these :—Look to yourselves (2 John 8) ; Looking unto Jesus (Heb. xii. 2) ; Looking stedfastly up to heaven (Acts vii. 55). The first is a command to look to ourselves, unto the state of our heart—what it has been, and what it has made us from childhood, youth, and riper years. This looking will humble us, distress us, and bring us to self-despair : this will prepare us for the next sight—a kind exhortation to look to Jesus,—to His wisdom, power,—love to His person as God and man,—to His work of righteousness and atonement,—to His all-sufficient fulness of grace. Look to Him as your only confidence, and as your example of suffering. ' Not my will, but Thine be done,' was the language of His tongue and heart. He looks on you with a pitying eye—look to Him with a believing eye ; and let your eyes meet, and let your heart say, ' My Lord and my God.' Then you

will have the third look, with Stephen, up to heaven, and long to be where He is, to behold Him without a cloud. They looked, and were enlightened; they looked, and were healed,—look, and be saved.

REV. T. ENGLISH.

May 14th.

'For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings.'—PROV. v. 21.

THE setting the Lord always before us, as our Lord and Ruler who has a sovereign right over us and our service; the considering Him as one always present with us; the regarding Him as the exact observer of our thoughts, words, and actions; the eyeing of Him as the Judge before whose tribunal all our principles and ways are to come, would have a very powerful influence on the heart, when we are engaged in the acts of immediate worship. When in the closet, what a striking thought is it, God is here! Though my door is shut, *He is not, He cannot be* excluded. When in the public assembly, He knows all my intentions, exactly distinguishes betwixt truth and appearance. In the crowd I stand as much exposed to the eye of God, as if I stood all alone before His piercing eyes. This temper of soul would be an excellent preservative against sin. How would it break the force of temptation, and check the flowing vanity of spirit! How greatly would it advance our fitness for heaven! It would familiarize the thoughts of the upper world, and very much mould and temper our souls into a suitableness to the heavenly state. Hereby we would bring much of heaven to earth, or, which is all one, raise our thoughts from earth to heaven. This is truly to have our conversation in heaven.

REV. H. DAVIDSON.

May 15th.

'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'—MATT. xi. 28.

JESUS CHRIST the Lord is a complete, all-sufficient Saviour. His invitation to the weary and heavy laden is general, without exception, condition, or limitation. He has said, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will *in no wise* cast out.' God not only permits, but commands us to believe in the Son of His love. When Moses raised the brazen serpent in the wilderness, the direction to the wounded Israelites was very short and simple. It was only, *Look and live*. Thus the gospel addresses the sinner, '*Only believe, and thou shalt be saved*.' Why then does not *every* sinner, who is awakened to a sense of his guilt, danger, and helplessness, and whose desires are drawn towards the Saviour, believe with full confidence even upon his first application for mercy? Is not the remedy fully adequate to the malady? Is not the blood of Christ able to cleanse from all sin? Is not the word of the God of truth worthy of entire credit? Yet with such a Saviour exhibited before the eyes of his mind, and with such promises sounding in his ears, he continues to hesitate, to hope, and to fear. Could he rely as firmly on the word of God as he can on the word of man, who, he thinks, means what he says, and is able to make good his promises, he would immediately be filled with joy and peace in believing.

REV. J. NEWTON.

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May 16th.

'Good and upright is the Lord : therefore will He teach sinners in the way.'—PS. xxv. 8.

WILL the Saviour let a soul wander and be lost, that hath entirely given up itself to be led and taught by Him? His word hath at once expressed to you His nature and His goodwill towards you in this case. 'Good and

upright is the Lord ; therefore will He teach sinners in the way.' But what sinners ? The next words tell you : ' The weak (self-resigned ones, humble, teachable learners) He will guide in judgment,' or with judgment, as that particle admits to be read. He will guide them judiciously and surely : so that your hearts need not misgive, or suspect, or doubt to follow. ' The meek will He teach His way.' Who would not wish and be glad to have such a teacher ? You shall know (how express is His word !) if you follow on to know the Lord. You do not need to devise in the morning how to create your own light, it is prepared and ready for you ; the sun was made before you were, and it keeps its course, and as constantly will God's light shine on you, without your contrivance or care, for anything but to seek it, receive it, and be guided by it.

REV. J. HOWE.

May 17th.

' And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.'—ZECH. xiii. 10.

SAVING faith is the *leading grace*, especially to the exercise of true repentance. The acting of the former is in order to the exercise of the latter. Accordingly we read in the Scripture, that ' a great number *believed* and *turned* unto the Lord ;' and that the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, shall *look* upon Him whom they have pierced, and shall *mourn* for Him. The tears of godly sorrow drop as it were from the eye of faith. It is the exercise of faith in the crucified Redeemer that melts the hard heart into penitential mourning, and that produces the tears which run down in repentance. The eye of faith fixes on God in Christ, as a God of love, mercy, and grace ; and then, by repentance, the heart *turns* to Him, and to the love and practice of true holiness. The exercise of true repentance flows immediately

from *unfeigned love* to Christ, and to God in Him ; but such love to Him springs from the exercise of *true faith* on Him. The believing sinner exercises godly sorrow for his sins, because he pierced Christ his dear Redeemer by them. But this he could not do unless he loved Christ with a supreme and tender love.

REV. DR. COLQUHOUN.

May 18th.

' Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. '—ISA. lx. i.

BEING risen, put on your beautiful garments. Draw towards you, with the hand of faith, the rich mantle of Christ's righteousness. 'Tis time to awake, says the apostle, Rom. xiii. 11, and presently after, *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ*. And it is a wonder how a sinner can rest while he is out of this garment ; for there is no other in heaven nor earth can make him shine to God, and so shelter him from the stroke of justice. Put Him on, then, and so shine ; being thus clothed, thou shalt shine in justification, and likewise in sanctity. What a privilege is it to be like God ! A sanctified conscience, what can be said against it ? Saving light produces love, and by that acts. Faith works by love, says the apostle ; that breaks forth, and shines in the life in godliness, righteousness, and sobriety. Shine then in all these ; first in piety towards God, for this is the reflection of these rays of light back toward their source, and this will command the other too. Shine *humbly* to His glory, whose light you borrow ; not to show forth your excellences, but His *who hath called you from darkness to His marvellous light*. If we be children of light, our brightness must praise the Father of lights. Let *your light so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify* (not you, but) *your heavenly Father*.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

May 19th.

'He shall glorify me ; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.'—JOHN xvi. 14.

THE Spirit enables us to apprehend and believe the mercy and grace revealed in the gospel. Hence arises a hope that maketh not ashamed. This hope enters the soul, as the sun does a garden in spring ; calling forth, by a genial influence, the leaves and the buds after the dreariness of winter. We are sweetly yet powerfully excited and encouraged to make known our requests unto God. We see that our case, however deplorable, is provided for ; that all things are now ready ; that the blessings we need are as free as they are suitable. Particularly do we see Jesus as the Mediator of the new covenant, as once suffering for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us unto God ; as the way to the Father ; and have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. Thus these words of the Saviour are fulfilled, 'He shall glorify me ; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.'

REV. W. JAY.

May 20th.

'But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'—PROV. iv. 18.

IT is difficult to determine by the eye the precise moment of day-break ; but the light advances from early dawn, and the sun arises at the appointed hour. Such is the progress of divine light in the mind ; the first streaks of the dawn are seldom perceived ; but, by degrees, objects till then unthought of are disclosed. The evil of sin, the danger of the soul, the reality and importance of eternal things, are apprehended, and a hope of mercy through a Saviour is discovered, which prevents the sinner from falling into absolute despair ; but for a time all

is indistinct and confused. In this state of mind many things are anxiously sought for as prerequisites to believing, but they are sought in vain, for it is only by believing that they can be obtained. But the light increases, the sun arises, the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ shines in upon the soul. As the sun can only be seen by its own light, and diffuses that light by which other objects are clearly perceived ; so Christ crucified is the sun in the system of revealed truth, and the right knowledge of the doctrine of His cross satisfies the inquiring mind, proves itself to be the one thing needful, and the only thing necessary to silence the objections of unbelief and pride, and to afford a sure ground for solid and abiding hope.

REV. J. NEWTON.

May 21st.

'O fear the Lord, ye His saints : for there is no want to them that fear Him.'—Ps. xxxiv. 9.

BELIEVE, O believe the goodwill of God towards you, and be at peace. There is a rich promise made in the gospel for you ; a precious blood of such atoning power as to cancel all your guilt ; a perfect righteousness to clothe and present you without spot or blemish before the throne of glory with exceeding joy ; an Almighty Spirit to take up His abode in you as a teacher, making known to you God's loving-kindness in His dear Son, and assuring you of the personal possession of the unsearchable riches of Christ ; as a sanctifier, subduing your rebellious spirit, producing in you a conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, and preparing you for the enjoyment of God in glory ; as a comforter, supporting you under all the trials and difficulties of this present world ; and as a guide, directing your steps into the paths of peace.

REV. H. M'NEILE.

May 22d.

'Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness in the day-time ; and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.'—Ps. xlii. 8.

BOTH night and day open sources of comfort, when Jesus is present, and when Jesus sanctifies. How, indeed, my soul, canst thou be otherwise than comfortable while Jesus is with thee, and manifesting Himself unto thee? And do observe, my soul, the sweet expression in this verse. Thy Lord, thy Jesus, will both create blessings, and command them. This loving-kindness, which is better than life itself, will make day-light in the soul, when otherwise it is night ; and His love will shine, as the stars in the darkest night sparkle with more lustre, with increasing brightness, when dark providences are around. Nay, Jesus will give songs in the night, when all things are out of tune. Do Thou, Lord, do Thou, my Lord, command Thy loving-kindness both by day and night, and my prayer and praise shall both go forth to Thee, the God of my life. It shall put more gladness in my heart, than when corn, and wine, and oil increase.

REV. DR. HAWKER.

May 23d.

'For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure ; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.'—HEB. xii. 10.

AFFLICTION is a great realizer in religion, or rather a great detector of the want of reality in religion. We perhaps thought ourselves Christians, and that we were founded on the rock, and now an affliction comes, and we shake like aspen leaves. Could this be if we were really on the rock? We thought fondly that God was the chosen portion of our souls, and that though all created things were taken from us, we had enough when we had Him ; and yet when He crosses some desire of

our hearts, or removes some of His own gifts,—a friend perhaps, or even a little of the world's trash,—we seem as if we had lost our all, and cry after it, as that Danite did after his idols; and thus we learn the fact, that our comfort before did not, as we idly supposed, flow from the eternal fountain (for that still remains to us), but had been drawn from perishing cisterns; and therefore, now that they are broken, we die of thirst. This is an important discovery, and it was to make this discovery to us that God sent the affliction. Let us then receive it in deep humility,—let us receive it as a call from God to leave the creature behind us, and go directly into His inner chamber.

T. ERSKINE, ESQ.

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May 24th.

'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?'—Ps. xlii. 1, 2.

BELIEVERS in some happy moment can say, 'It is better for me to die than to live.' All principles in the human soul draw naturally towards their native country. As sin draws down towards hell, from whence it came, so grace naturally draws up to heaven, its native land. When the heart is strongly influenced by this heavenly principle, and communion is enjoyed with the world above, holy longings spring up in the soul after the promised land. When weary pilgrims drink of the well of Bethlehem, and taste in the wilderness of the grapes of Canaan, they long to see that holy land. They have believed the report which is given of it, that it is 'a good land, flowing with milk and honey;' in believing the report, they ardently desire to go up and possess it. They mount the top of Nebo, and there take the glass of faith, and survey the land, the land of endless rest. In hearing the Spirit whispering to their souls, and saying, That land is your inheritance for ever, go up and take possession, ardent thirst and holy longing fill the soul,

till each believer cries, 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the living God ; when shall I come and appear before God ?'

REV. T. JONES.

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May 25th.

'In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'—REV. xxii. 2.

HE that is entirely of the world finds it a world of conflicts ; and cannot escape ; he may receive a wound from it ; but the worst of his case is, that he has no *physician* to apply to, 'though the *sorrow* of the world worketh death.' What a blessed thing it is to fight for the *truth*, for the honour of God, for everlasting life ; to strive for the noblest prize ; to wear celestial armour ; to have free access to that tree whose *leaves are for the healing of the nations*, and which heal every wound upon the immediate application ; to fight with the Captain at our side, and to be sure of the victory !

J. BACON, ESQ.

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May 26th.

'Search the Scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me.'—JOHN v. 39.

SEARCH diligently the word of eternal life, enriched and ennobled as it is with the chain and the accomplishment of its prophecies ; with the splendour of its miracles ; with the attestation of its martyrs ; the consistency of its doctrines ; the importance of its facts ; the plenitude of its precepts ; the treasury of its promises ; the irradiations of the Spirit ; the abundance of its consolations ; the proportion of its parts ; the symmetry of the whole, altogether presenting such a fund of instruction to the mind, of light to the path, of satisfaction to the heart,

as demonstrably prove it to be the instrument of God for the salvation of man.

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

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May 27th.

'The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls ; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.'—MATT. xiii. 45, 46.

Is religion, this pearl of great price, in *my* possession ? Important question ! If so, give God the glory due unto His name ; for flesh and blood, ordinances and ministers, have not imparted this blessing unto us, but our Father who is in heaven. But if, alas ! our conscience testifies that we are utter strangers to a religion which is emphatically described as 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,' let us not rest satisfied with our state, for it is most awful ! but, with many a humble, heartfelt prayer, entreat the Giver of every good gift to bestow on us this invaluable blessing ; and whilst we peruse the sacred page of Scripture, entreat Him to open our understanding, that we may understand it, and thus be made wise to the salvation of our souls.

REV. DR. COX.

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May 28th.

'But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.'—HEB. i. 8.

To whom are those words addressed, and by whom ? By God the Father, to God the Son. To Him, who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, yet left all, and veiled that glory, and undertook to bear the sins of the whole world, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man,—a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief !—who was despised, and had not where to lay His head !

yet who, amidst all this, spoke to the winds and the waves, and they obeyed Him; cast out devils, raised the dead; and proved that He was Lord of the world, of hell, and of death and the grave; who felt our feelings, and being God and man, was able, and in His love *chose* to bear all the burden of our guilt! now our victorious exalted Lord—Lord of heaven and earth!—our all-prevailing Intercessor! our High Priest, who bears upon His heart, before God, the names of all His true Israel. O for language to express His glory! How immeasurably distant all our poor conceptions from the fulness of even what is revealed!

MISS G. KENNEDY.

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May 29th.

'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.'—PHIL. ii. 13.

I AM as certain my salvation is of God, as I am certain it cannot be of myself. It is Christ who vouchsafed to die for me, who hath likewise promised to live within me; it is He that will work all my works both for me and *in* me too. In a word, it is to Him I am beholden, not only for my spiritual blessings and enjoyments, but even for my temporal ones too, which in and through His name I daily put up my petitions for. So that I have not so much as a morsel of bread in mercy from God, but only upon the account of Christ; not a drop of drink, but what flows to us in His blood. It is He that is the best blessing of all my blessings, without whom my very mercies would prove but curses, and my prosperity would but work my ruin.

Whither, therefore, should I go, my dear and blessed Saviour, but unto Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and how shall I come, but by Thee? Thou hast the treasures of all grace. Oh Thou that hast wrought out my salvation for me, be pleased likewise to work this salvation in me! Give me, I beseech Thee, such a mea-

sure of Thy grace as to believe in Thee here upon earth :
and then give me such degrees of glory, as fully to enjoy
Thee for ever in heaven !

BISHOP BEVERIDGE.

May 30th.

‘For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’—ROM. viii. 38, 39.

A DISCIPLE’S present enjoyment may indeed correspond to the energy of the hold which he takes of Christ ; but his real safety depends on the might and constancy of the hold which Christ takes and keeps of him. ‘My beloved is mine’—there lies my present happiness ; but ‘I am His’—there lies my everlasting safety. A very slight breath of temptation may break asunder your love to Christ ; but all the powers of darkness cannot overcome His love to you. Who shall separate ? The heroic Paul sent forth the challenge to all the principalities and powers of creation. . . . But the ground of this man’s confidence all the while lay in the constancy, not of himself, but of his Saviour. The hand which he felt compassing him about, which he knew would hold him to the end, was ‘the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.’

REV. WILLIAM ARNOT.

May 31st.

‘Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me ; for my soul trusteth in Thee : yea, in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.’—Ps. lvii. 1.

DEAR child of God, if you should meet with many trials, if it should appear as if you were singled out to endure hardships or distress, still speak to our Saviour, and say, ‘Have mercy upon me !’ If a sense of your

sin bows you down and dejects you, still pray, 'Have mercy upon me.' Let us pray to the Holy Ghost to grant us such a deep and continual sense of our great poverty, and need of redemption and the Redeemer, that till our last moment this may be our inmost heart's prayer, 'Have pity upon me! Have mercy upon me! Lord, help me!' And may our compassionate High Priest indeed have mercy upon us, and help us now in this present life, as long as we are strangers and pilgrims in the world; in our last hour, when our strength fails us, and we must go into eternity; and also in the day of judgment, when heaven and earth shall flee before Him, and He shall sit upon the throne of His glory, and judge all nations! Yea, then, Lord, especially help us, and have mercy upon us, for Thy name's sake.

REV. J. CENNICK.

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June 1st.

'God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us. That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.'—Ps. lxxvii. 1, 2.

ARE *we*, then, *convinced* of our guilt and of our misery? Is it established in our minds as a *truth*, that *we sinners* can find *no relief* but in *fleeing for refuge* to *Jesus Christ*, whose 'righteousness is unto all, and upon all them who believe'? Are we aware that in *every condition* in which we can be placed we shall *still need mercy*? and are we 'looking for the *mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*'? Then happy are we; for 'mercy shall be built up for ever.'

Let us examine then with good fidelity, whether *personal* religion deeply engages our minds and hearts. Let us each ask himself, Have I felt my need of this mercy which the Church here implores? Am I *fully convinced* that I cannot stand in the judgment, unless I be interested in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? And do I trust in His righteousness, that in *Him* I may

be blessed with all spiritual blessings? Do I *experimentally* know what it is to enjoy the light of God's countenance? Am I anxious to enjoy it, and to enjoy it more and more? When at any time I am so favoured, do I endeavour to derive from this privilege new motives to all holy obedience? After the example of David in this psalm (lxvii. 1, 2), do I connect with prayer for my own religious enjoyment, a concern for the furtherance of the gospel, and for the salvation of perishing souls? Questions such as these, if seriously considered, may help us to ascertain whether we are or are not the people of God.

REV. DR. WRIGHT.

June 2d.

'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'
—JOHN xiii. 7.

TRAVELLERS in Alpine countries tell us, that when in early morning they have wound their way down some steep mountain pass, they have seen far below, between them and the plain, a cloud floating in mid-air, tinged with many a glowing colour caught from the rising sun. Then, reflecting the most gorgeous tints, amber, and ruby, and emerald, it has hung like a bright and pendant jewel in the morning sky. But strange to say, the traveller who, ascending from the valley beneath, pursues an upward path, sees the same cloud hanging a misty vapour in the sky, cold and dark,—a vapour which, rolling in between the sun and himself, arrests the warm rays, and shrouds him in its chilling shadow. Even so is it with many of the providences of God: viewed from the heavenward side, they are bright with mercy: viewed from the earthward, they appear dark and threatening. Let us, then, ever endeavour to look upon trying dispensations as though we had heaven for our standing-point, and we shall not fail to see the goodness of God casting a bright light on the bosom of the blackest cloud.

REV. CHARLES D. BELL, M.A.

June 3d.

'I am thy exceeding great reward.'—GEN. xv. 1.

WHAT the Lord said to Abraham, He says to each and to all, 'I am thy exceeding great reward.' If the vision of God shall constitute the blessedness of the coming world, then they whose spiritual eye is most enlightened will drink in most of His glory; then, since only like can know like, all advances which are made here, made in humility, in holiness, in love, are a polishing of the mirror that it may reflect more distinctly the divine image; a purging of the eye that it may see more clearly the divine glory; an enlarging of the vessel that it may receive more amply of the divine fulness.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

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June 4th.

'Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.'—PS. xxxvii. 4, 5, 7.

THINK how surely 'rest comes with delighting in God. For that soul must needs be calm, which is freed from the distraction of various desires by the one master-attraction. Such a soul is still as the great river above the falls, in which all the side currents and dimpling eddies and backwaters are effaced by the attraction that draws every drop in the one direction; or like the same stream as it nears its end, and, forgetting how it brawled among rocks and flowers in the mountain glens, flows 'with a calm and equable motion' to its rest in the central sea. Let the current of your being set towards God, then your life will be filled and calmed by one master-passion which unites and stills the soul.

And for another reason there will be peace; because in such a case, desire and fruition go together. 'He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.' Only do not vulgarize that great promise, by making it out to mean

that, if we will be good, He will give us the earthly blessings which we wish. Sometimes we shall get them, and sometimes not; but our text goes far deeper than that. God Himself is the heart's desire of those who delight in Him; and the blessedness of longing fixed on Him is that it ever fulfils itself. They who want God have Him. Your truest joy is in His fellowship and His grace.

REV. A. MACLAREN.



June 5th.

'The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.'—PROV. xiv. 10.

A CHRISTIAN has his peculiar sorrows, his peculiar joys. His heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joys. If a tear fall from his eyes, it falls with a consideration in his mind, like that of Job or Hezekiah under correction. Others may think of nothing but chance; but this man's sorrow will be accompanied by a consideration, that God is to be acknowledged in his trouble.

'Not from the dust my joys and sorrows spring.'

He will mourn for his own sin. He will mourn for the scandals of the Church. Perhaps it is a personal affair which afflicts him, or possibly it is a family concern; but still he will see the hand of God in the affliction of persons, and in the distress of families: and he views it with a believing eye, and with a child-like spirit, and will be ready to say with Job, 'Show me wherefore thou contendest with me.'

REV. R. CECIL.



June 6th.

'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?'—LUKE xi. 13.

GLORIOUS promise! so sublime! 'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children' (why, we know

that the tenderness and love of human parents are proverbial), 'how much more shall your heavenly Father give !' Give what ? health, and freedom from pain, and a sound mind in a sound body ? Good things these ; but He will give something better. What then ? long life and many days ? Ah ! it might be only a grief of heart to thee ; no, something better. Large store of silver and gold, flocks and herds, and great worldly well-being ? Ah ! the canker of self-indulgence might convert it all to a curse. All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ? Nay, better, much better,—*the Holy Spirit*, to be the soul of thy soul, to new-create thy moral nature in the image of God, to dwell in Thee, and walk in Thee, making Thy heart His shrine, a present stream of joy and strength and consolation, springing up into everlasting life. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him ! Glorious promise, so free : free as the air of heaven to those who will but come forth and breathe it ; free as the rivers of the earth to those who will but dip a cup in them and slake their thirst. Then come forthwith and claim this mighty boon ; come with strong desire ; let the heart speak rather than the mouth ; come in steadfast faith, fastening the whole soul upon that solemn asseveration : ' Yea, let God be true, and every man a liar : ' and, lo, your word is a word of power. It has unlocked heaven ! Before you call He answers, and while you are yet speaking He hears.

REV. DR. GOULBURN.

June 7th.

' Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'—REV. II. 10.

MAY we view everything in the light in which it will be seen by us while on the bed of death, and the moment we have passed beyond it. May we live like those who confidently look to heaven as their eternal home, and who are resolved, that whatever we may lose, we will make sure of this : ' Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'

Delight yourselves in drawing near to God, and in the Spirit of adoption given to His own children, send up petitions to His throne. Ever keep in mind your utter dependence upon His providence, as well as on His grace, and that without Him you can do nothing. Acknowledge Him in all your ways, and He will direct your steps. Religion is likely to prosper in your souls, in proportion as you live much in the habit of secret prayer.

REV. DR. DEWAR.

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June 8th.

'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.'
—JOHN iii. 19.

JESUS rose as the 'Sun of righteousness,' but 'men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' His doctrine shone with the pure radiance of heavenly truth, unclouded by error. His life was one beam of untainted holiness; it blazed with the combined splendour of a thousand graces. His miracles, all benevolent and all open to inspection, shed a glory around Him altogether divine. But the world, instead of admiring, were offended with doctrines too sublime for the apprehension of their dark minds, and a morality too pure for the love of their depraved hearts. The name of Jesus was hated, for the very reasons on account of which it ought to have been honoured and loved. Let His name perish, cried the men of that age; and a corrupt priesthood was foremost in the cry. He fell, the victim of their hatred, loaded with every species of opprobrium which their malignant hearts could devise, in their opinion to rise no more for ever to life or to esteem. Vain imagination! He rose more glorious by His fall. In heaven, whither He hath ascended, He enjoys 'a name above every name;' and on earth the name of 'the Just One' lives, and His memory is yet blessed.

REV. DR. PEDDIE.

June 9th.

'I AM THAT I AM.'—EX. iii. 14.

THE believer is called to wayfaring struggles. He has to bear a daily fight, but in every hour of need a sure support is near. Behold Moses! the ground which he must tread is very slippery; the hill of his difficulties is very steep—a foe opposes every step; but a staff and a sword are provided for him in the name of his guiding and protecting Lord. 'I AM THAT I AM:' on this he can lean the whole burden of his cares, and fears, and pains. By this he can scatter kings as dust. This stay is still the same—ever mighty—ever near. The feeblest pilgrim may grasp it by the hand of faith, and whosoever grasps it is as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

DEAN LAW OF GLOUCESTER.

June 10th.

'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.'—
EPH. vi. 10.

EXERCISE faith upon every attribute, and thereby make it to be your care in the use and improvement thereof: 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might;' that is, let your faith take hold of the strength of God, and thereby let it rise into such a height of confidence, as if you had almighty power in your hand to exercise. If thou be in any strait, and dost want wisdom to direct thee in thy way, be thou wise by the wisdom of God, and let thy faith raise thee up into that height of confidence, that it is as impossible for Satan to outwit thee, as it is to go beyond infinite wisdom; and so, if thou sin at any time, question thy pardon no more than if thou hadst infinite mercy in thine own hand, and wast able to pardon thyself; for it is all made over to thee in this one promise, 'I will be thy God;' for that which is originally

and essentially in God, that by our dependence becomes ours, as truly as if we were the subjects in which it doth reside. It should raise up a man into a holy greatness of mind suitable unto such a privilege; and it is a thing of no small concernment, that the people of God should be raised up to such a holy greatness; for it would free them from those vain hopes and fears, and those bad employments, that now they are busied about; for there is nothing great here below.

REV. W. STRONG.

June 11th.

'So the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.'—EZEK. iii. 14.

I KNOW not, I wonder, how I shall succeed in mental improvement, and especially in religion. Oh! it is a difficult thing to be a Christian. I feel the necessity of reform through all my soul; when I retire into thought, I feel myself environed by a crowd of impressive and awful images. I fix an ardent gaze on Christianity, assuredly the last best gift of Heaven to men; on Jesus, the agent and example of infinite love; on time as it passes away; on perfection as it shines beauteous in heaven, and alas! as remote; and I ask myself, Why do not my passions burn? why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath, to dash my icy habits into fervid exertion, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust? At intervals, I feel devotion, and benevolence, and a surpassing ardour; but when they are turned towards substantial, laborious operation, they fly, and leave me spiritless amid iron labour. Still, however, I confide in the efficacy of persistent prayers; and I do hope that the Spirit of the Lord will yet come mightily upon me, and carry me on through toils, and sufferings, and death, to stand in Mount Zion among the followers of the Lamb.

REV. J. FOSTER.

June 12th.

'For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.'—I CHRON. xxix. 14.

YOU find one man thinking, that if he repent he shall be pardoned. In other words, he supposes there is a virtue in repentance, which causes it to procure forgiveness. Thus repentance is exhibited as meritorious; and how shall we simply prove that it is not meritorious? Why, allowing that man can repent of himself,—which he cannot,—what is the repentance on which he presumes? What is there in it of his own? The tears? they are but the dew of an eye which is God's. The sighs? they are but the heavings of a heart which is God's. The resolutions? they are but the workings of faculties which are God's. The amendment? it is but the better employment of a life which is God's. Away, then, with the notion of there being merit in repentance, seeing that the penitent man must say, 'All things come of Thee, and of *Thine own*, O God, have we given Thee.' Again, some speak of being justified by faith, till they come to ascribe merit to faith. 'By faith' is interpreted as though it meant on account of faith; and thus the great truth is lost sight of, that we are justified freely 'through the redemption that is in Christ.' But how can faith be a meritorious act? What is faith but such an assent of the understanding to God's word as binds the heart to God's service? and whose is the understanding if it be not God's? Whose is the heart if it be not God's? And if faith be nothing but the rendering to God that intellect, and that energy, which we have received from God, how can faith deserve of God? Oh! as with repentance, so with faith. Away with the notion of merit. He who believes, so that he can dare the grace, and grasp eternity, must pour forth the confession, 'All things come of Thee, and of *Thine own*, O God, do I give Thee.'

REV. H. MELVILLE.

June 13th.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.—GAL. v. 22.

It may be said of the Holy Spirit what Christ has said of other spirits, 'By His fruits ye shall know Him.' 'The fruit of the Spirit is love;' love of God, from a just sense of His perfections, which render Him no less the object of rational love than of holy fear; love of man, as created in the image of God; a more special love of Christians, as brethren and members of Christ. 'Joy;' a mind untroubled and secure amidst all the discouragements and vexations of the world. 'Peace;' a disposition and endeavour to live peaceably with all men, not only by avoiding what might justly provoke their enmity and ill-will, but by a studious cultivation of the friendship of mankind, by all means which may be consistent with the purity of our own conduct, and with the interests of that religion which we are called upon at all hazards to profess and to maintain. 'LONG-SUFFERING;' a temper more inclined to bear than to retaliate much unprovoked injury and undeserved reproach, esteeming injury and reproach a lighter evil of the two, than the restless spirit of contention and revenge. 'GENTLENESS, GOODNESS, FAITH, MEEKNESS, TEMPERANCE;' these are the fruits by which the Spirit of God is known. But every man's own conscience must decide whether these fruits are ripened to any perfection in his heart; whether these are the ruling principles of his conduct. If his conscience is void of offence towards God and towards man; if he makes it the business of this life to prepare for his future existence; if he uses the present world without abusing it; if he is patient in affliction, not elated in prosperity, mild in power, content in servitude, liberal in wealth, honest in poverty, fervent in devotion, temperate in pleasure; if he value not the present world above its real worth, and sets his chief affection on eternity,—this propriety of conduct in the various situations of life—this

holy habit of the soul, turning from the things that are seen, and looking forward to the things invisible—is the undoubted work of God's Holy Spirit.

BISHOP HORSLEY.



June 14th.

'Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.'—ISA. liii. 10.

OF the fruits of the sufferings and death of the Redeemer we can form no adequate idea. They constitute a field of discovery on which the glorified spirits of the just shall enter at death, and which an eternity of intellectual and moral advancement will not exhaust. Till this body of sin and death shall be laid down, we can see but a feeble glimpse of them through the impurity and imperfection by which we are encompassed; and after all our efforts to conceive of them aright, we must adopt the language of the apostle, 'that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love Him.' But by His all-comprehensive mind they are fully perceived and understood; He requires not to wait the actual manifestation of the successive steps by which the redeemed shall be progressively approaching nearer to God, in order to comprehend fully the blessed effects of His mediatorial work; and in the contemplation of the evil which He has thus put down, and of the good which He has substituted in its room, 'He sees of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.'

REV. DR. GORDON.

June 15th.

'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.'—JOHN x. 16.

OH, how beautiful is Christianity ! how lovely art thou, religion of Jesus ! Oh, faith in the crucified, what peace, what joy thou impartest to the sinner !

You who are Christians, sheep of the Good Shepherd, whom He knows and distinguishes from the multitude among which you are scattered ; you *who have tasted that the Lord is gracious*, and whose you for ever are ; now earnestly pray that the Father may deign to direct a look of compassion upon His people, and may draw many of the unfortunate wanderers, who now reject Him, to a state of favour and reconciliation with the Son of His love.

'Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God ;
He, to save my soul from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.'

REV. DR. MALAN.

June 16th.

'And now, O Lord God, the word that Thou hast spoken concerning Thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as Thou hast said.'—2 SAM. vii. 25.

Do you, O believer, want the presence of your Saviour ? He hath said, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of world ; I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Are you afraid of condemnation ? He hath said, 'Deliver his soul from going down to the pit, I have found out a ransom.' Oh what encouragement is here to go and pray, and plead, 'Lord, do as Thou hast said' !

Look about you, and see if anything that happens be not an accomplishment of the word ; and oh, how should

you value this word! not a jot or tittle of it shall fall to the ground.

Walk in this garden of the Scripture; pluck up the flowers of gospel promises, and put them in your bosom; live by faith upon the promise, and be persuaded, whatever stands in the way, that He will do as He hath said. He will do so, for what He hath said, He hath written; what He hath said, He hath sealed; what He hath said, He hath sworn; what He hath said, He will never unsay: therefore take hold of His word of grace, and hold Him at His word in life and death, saying, 'Do as Thou hast said.'

REV. R. ERSKINE.

June 17th.

'What think ye of Christ?'—MATT. xxii. 42.

WE cannot believe too highly of Jesus; we cannot think Him more gracious or loving than He is. There is more in Him than we can ask or think. He is Almighty God, who has left all in heaven, and in the bosom of His Father, and came down with no other view or design but to redeem lost souls out of the slavery and service of Satan, and to open a way for them by His own blood, into the holiest place of all, even heaven itself, whither He is now entered to prepare a place for us. There is not a single soul out of the reach of His mercy. He is Lord of all; He is Lord of the living and of the dead; His hand is not cramped or shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear; and when it has gone so far, that to all human appearance there is no hope, all things are possible with Him. Venture, then, and pray to Him, be your case what it will, 'Lord, help us!' Fix your eyes upon His cross; trust only and entirely, body and soul, upon that crucified God, and worship before His feet, which once burned with anguish, and were red like brass in the furnace. To Him say, 'Have mercy upon me!' He has felt your need, and

knows how to show mercy. Let your faith in Him only be great, and it shall be done to you, even as you will; you shall find the same loving Redeemer, rich in mercy to all them that call upon Him in faith.

REV. J. CENNICK.

June 18th.

'This is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us.'—
ISA. xxv. 9.

IT often happens, that the objects of worldly expectation, when they arrive, produce feelings of disappointment; but how different are the feelings with which your Lord will be welcomed! This is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Oh why, my soul, art thou so cold in thy wishes, so languid in thy efforts, and so sluggish in thy preparations for that day? I have said, Would to God it were morning! yet light hath brought me no healing in its wings. In my Lord, when He comes, I must be happy, for His power and love are eternal. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, and be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that shall be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

REV. DR. BELFRAGE.

June 19th.

'There shall be no night there.'—REV. xxii. 5.

'OH, thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted,' fear not! every billow of affliction is wafting thee nearer the haven of rest, where not one wave of trouble rolls. The night of trial, the night of sin, the night of death, to be exchanged for one uninterrupted, unbroken, eternal day! Blessed hope! why fear the storm, with such a haven before thee? Why dread 'the

night,' with the prospect of this sinless, cloudless, sorrowless morning of immortality?

Jesus is acquainted with all thy darkness, all thy trials, all thy perplexities, all thy temptations, all thy sorrows. He is following thee through all the changing scenes of a changing world; Himself alone remaining unchanged. He is never worn out; He never grows weary; He is always the same—an *Unfailing Friend*! He has gone to prepare a place for thee—mansions of everlasting bliss—in His Father's house. Lift thine eye upwards, heavenwards, homewards! And oh, however dark and dreary may be thy nights of trial HERE, let this be thy solace and support in their gloomiest hours—let it sustain thee in adversity, and lighten thy sorrows, and cheer thee in trouble, and at last smooth thy death pillow—'There shall be no night THERE!' "

REV. J. R. MACDUFF.

June 20th.

'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none in earth that I desire besides Thee.'—Ps. lxxiii. 25.

O LORD, for Thee my soul longeth, to be where Thou art, and as Thou art. O heaven! heaven! my God is in thee; He that is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. If Thou art mine (and that Thou art, Thy promises have given me most reviving assurance), if Thou art mine, what can I ask for more, or wish beside? Lord, Thou art all-sufficient. Whilst here I linger out the moment allotted me; though distant, too distant from Thee, Thou shalt be still my joy and my hope. What rival would steal away my affections from Thee? What earthly object would intrude, and rob Thee of my love? Lord, there is nothing upon earth I desire in comparison of Thee: wealth, honour, and pleasure, tempt me away; but what can they give in exchange for Thee! Are they not dross? Are they not in the balances lighter than vanity itself? Think, my

foolish heart, when thou inclinest to listen to the syren's song, which on earth ensnares poor souls in perdition and destruction, think of the better portion ; live on Him who is alone able to supply the word written, and from the never-failing streams which flow from the fountain of all consolation will replenish thee day by day, till from the streams thou comest to the fountainhead, receivest the fulness of thy desires, and dwellest in God, and God in thee.

REV. T. HAWEIS.

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June 21st.

'He only is my rock and my salvation : He is my defence ; I shall not be greatly moved.'—Ps. lxii. 2.

Go thy way, Christian, to thy God : get thee to thy knees in the cloudy and dark day ; retire from all creatures, that thou mayest have thy full liberty with God, and there pour out thy heart before Him in free, full, and broken-hearted confessions of sin ; judge thyself worthy of hell, as well as of this trouble ; justify God in all His smartest strokes, and beg Him in this distress to put under thee the everlasting arms ; entreat one smile, one gracious look to enlighten thy darkness, and cheer thy drooping spirit. Say with the prophet Jeremiah, 'Be not Thou a terror to me ; Thou art my hope in the day of evil ;' and try what a relief such a course will afford thee. Surely, if thy heart be sincere in this course, thou shalt be able to say, with that holy man, 'In the multitude of my thoughts which I had within me, Thy comforts delighted my soul.'

REV. S. FLAVEL.

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June 22d.

'All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'—
1 COR. iii. 23.

By the righteousness of Christ, O believer, thou art entitled unto everything that possibly thou canst stand

in need of. Whatever grace or mercy thou wantest, thou shalt have it, if thou do but improve this law-binding righteousness. Wantest thou pardoning grace to take away the guilt of sin? That is one of the gifts of God, through the righteousness of Christ, apprehended by faith, for He is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins! Wantest thou to have thy peace with God confirmed? Improve this righteousness by faith; for, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Wantest thou access unto the holiest? By faith in the blood of Jesus have we access with boldness. Wantest thou medicinal grace for healing of soul plagues? Implore this righteousness by faith; for by His stripes we are healed. Out of the side of our gospel altar comes forth living water, that healeth the corrupt and dead sea of indwelling corruption. 'This is the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.'

REV. E. ERSKINE.

June 23d.

'And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho; and the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan.'—
DEUT. xxxiv. 1.

As Moses, before he died, went up into Mount Nebo to take a survey of the land of Canaan, so the Christian ascends the mount of contemplation, and by faith surveys his rest. He looks upon the glorious mansion, and says, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God!' He hears, as it were, the melody of the heavenly choir, and says, 'Happy is the people that are in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!' As Paul was to the Colossians, so may the believer be with the glorified spirits, 'though absent in the flesh, yet with them in the spirit, joying and beholding their heavenly order.' And as the lark sweetly sings while she soars on high, but is suddenly silenced when she falls to the

earth ; so is the frame of the soul most delightful and divine, while it keeps in the view of God by contemplation. Alas ! we make there too short a stay ; fall down again, and lay by our music !

REV. R. BAXTER.

June 24th.

'Search the Scriptures.'—JOHN v. 39.

LEARN a lesson from the Eunuch's employment when St. Philip met him. He was reading the Scriptures with an inquiring and a candid mind. No opportunity could have been more favourable for the arrival of God's message of mercy and peace through Jesus Christ.

'Behold, he readeth the Scriptures,' is nearly as hopeful a symptom for the soul as 'Behold, he prayeth.' When God sees any one studying the Holy Volume with simplicity and earnestness, He throws Himself across that man's path, whether by a human messenger, or by some dispensation of providence, or by the inward teaching of His Spirit, until the scales fall from the eyes of the reader, and the study which was begun in darkness and perplexity is concluded in light and joy.

DR. E. M. GOULBURN.

June 25th.

'And call upon me in the day of trouble ; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.'—PS. l. 15.

IN the season of sickness and in the prospect of death, we are called upon to be *much* in prayer. It is our privilege to visit the throne, and wait upon our God : troubles furnish us with messages to our Father's throne, quicken us in our supplications, and oblige us to entreat His favour. His throne is always accessible, and His ear is always open ; but in times of trouble He especially moves us to draw near. He says, 'Call upon me :

trouble, call upon me in sickness, call upon me in the hour of death, call for whatever you want. Are you perplexed?—call for wisdom; are you weak?—call for strength; are you guilty?—call for pardon; are you miserable?—call for comfort; are you in darkness?—call for light; are you in bondage?—call for redemption and relief. Call, for I shall be in the way; call, for I shall be glad to see you; call, for I shall be ready to help you; call, for I will wait to be gracious unto you. Call upon me, upon me first, before you run to others; upon me, and you will have no occasion to go anywhere else, for I have all you can possibly want. Call upon me freely, without reserve; boldly, without fear; importunately, without doubt.' O believer, make use of thy privilege in every time of need, and fully expect what thy God has promised.

REV. J. SMITH.

June 26th.

'Who went about doing good.'—ACTS x. 38.

THE Saviour contemplated not at a distance the scenes of affliction and pain; but He drew near, witnessed, and shared them. His daily object was to diminish and sanctify misfortunes. When human welfare was the cause for which He toiled, no labour kept Him back, no fatigue withdrew His hand. The widow heard His step with gladness; and the orphan, when He spoke, more than *dreamed* of hope! Did a sister sit down dejected at a brother's grave, to unload her sorrows, and to pour forth her tears? Those sacred tears fell not unregarded, for 'Jesus wept.' Did an aged mother, bereft already of the partner of her bosom, now walk in melancholy procession to deposit in the tomb the body of her son? Lo! amidst the mourners one stood prominently forward, and said unto her, 'Weep not.' Is it the unfeeling language of him whose heart never yearned upon a child? Is it the harsh voice of one callous to maternal recollection, and deriding sorrows which he cannot understand? Oh

no! it is the language of Him who acted while He felt, and healed while He comforted. 'Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.' That voice the dead were accustomed to obey. 'He arose, and He delivered him to his mother.'

HON. AND REV. T. G. NOEL.

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June 27th.

'Moses my servant is dead.'—JOSH. i. 2.

THE text places us upon a summit, where, as from Pisgah, we look back upon a wilderness through which we have passed, and forward to that promised land into which those have already entered who trod the desert before us, or who were for a time the companions of our way, but earlier called to cross the 'narrow stream of death,' which rolls, like Jordan, its dark, cold wave between us and our inheritance. It is, indeed, an overpowering view—commanding all the past, in displaying the ravages of mortality; and all the future, in anticipating the glory that shall be revealed. Moses is dead only to us. In the pilgrimage of our blessed Master, He reappeared with Elijah in glory on the mount of transfiguration, emphatically called by St. Peter 'the holy mount.' While, therefore, the text places before us the past in tracing the ravages of death, it anticipates the future, and calls upon us to realize that glory into which our departed friends have entered, in a state of being unknown to us, but with which we shall soon become acquainted, and on the margin of which we stand.

REV. DR. COLLYER.

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June 28th.

'To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.'—JUDE 25.

SHALL we not attribute the praise of whatever we possess unto Him, without whom we had been nothing,

and can do nothing? Unto Him 'be the glory now ;'—unto Him be it ascribed 'for ever'—yes, 'for ever.' When the periods of time shall no longer be revolving as the periods of our being ; when our existence shall no longer have its seasons marked by the revolution of sun, moon, and stars ; when the soul, which in its present frail dwelling is moved by the changes of a fluctuating world, shall have survived unhurt amidst the destruction of the material creation itself, and during countless ages, numbered by the vast cycles of the celestial state, shall have continued 'faultless before the presence of the divine glory, joying with exceeding joy'—still even then no continuance in merits, nor stability in blessedness, shall occasion a moment's forgetfulness of Him, who gives all, and upholds the possession of all. The song of gratitude shall still be the same. For ever shall it express the language of humility ; all honour be disclaimed by the devout worshipper, the crown be laid low at the throne of mercy ; and the glory of being presented 'faultless' through eternity, be given unto the all-wise God our Saviour.

'O glorious hour, it comes with speed,
When we, from sin and darkness freed,
Shall see His face who died for man,
And praise Him more than angels can.'

REV. DR. MUIR.

June 28th.

'For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.'—1 THESS. v. 2.

CHRISTIAN, look forward to that day with joy. All your trials will end then, and all your joys be a glad fruition. You will be ever with the Lord. It is joy to meet Him here by faith ; what will it be to see Him as He is ? Heaven greets you at the mercy-seat on earth ; what will the unveiled presence of the Lord be ? It was sweet to meet the loving and the loved ones in this world

of sin and death, even in garments of sinful mortality ; what will it be to meet them in the likeness of Jesus and in garments of glory ? It was sweet to clasp our hands in theirs, and press our lips to theirs, and feel the heart throbbing with affection ere it was touched by the icy hand of death ; oh, what will it be when we shall behold them with every affection purified and intensified, with no sorrow to cloud, no disappointment to chafe, no sin to mar, and no death to sever ? The time is at hand. Keep this blessed hope before you. Lose not sight of it for a moment. Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me. Christian, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

REV. FREDERICK WHITFIELD.



June 29th.

'Be careful for nothing : but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.'—PHIL. iv. 6.

WHAT do you wish or want ? Go tell it to your Father. They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Can He who justified not sanctify ? Can He who enlisted us under His holy banner not provide munitions of war enough to secure, though there may be a hard fight for it, the final victory ? Can He who led the march out of Egypt not beat down our foes, and conduct our triumphant way through a thousand dangers and over a thousand difficulties, on to the promised land ? Oh yes, there is all efficiency and sufficiency in Jesus Christ to crown the work of grace, and to complete what He has begun ; there is His Holy Spirit to sanctify you ; there are stores of grace which, like the widow's barrel that grew no emptier for all the meals it furnished, will appear the fuller the more you draw on them. As with an arch, the grace of God stands the firmer the more weight you lay on it. Its sufficiency, at least, will be the more evident the more clearly you will see the

truth of the promise : My grace is sufficient for thee. With the well ever full and ever flowing, our vessels need never be empty ; whether, therefore, you want more faith, more purity of heart or peace of mind, more light or love, a humbler or a holier spirit, fear not to draw, to hope, to ask too much. No earthly fortune will stand daily visits to the bank, but this will. You may ask too little, you cannot ask too much.

REV. THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.



June 30th.

‘ For ye are bought with a price : therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s. — I COR. vi. 20.

OH that sin of unbelief, how it dishonours God, and mars the peace of thousands ! ‘ He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record which He hath given of His Son.’ And is this to give Him glory ? How many are at this hour mournful and disconsolate, oppressed with fear and groaning in misery, who might shout for joy but for lack of faith ! If they would give unto God the glory of His mercy, truth, and love ; if they would credit the divine testimony respecting Christ’s redemption-work, and rely upon it without suspicions and without distrust, how changed would their state be ! And how much would God be glorified in the sight of angels and of men, by their unsuspecting trust in His word, and their counting His testimony concerning Christ worthy of all acceptance ! Without faith it is impossible to please or to glorify God ; and hence we have placed belief in the doctrine of the text first in the order of glorifying duties, as not only supplying a motive, but as constituting a means. If the proposed ransom be declined, nothing can be done to glorify God, and we shall invariably advance or come short of the divine glory, according to the faith which we exercise.

REV. J. SIEVERIGHT.

July 1st.

'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'—ACTS xx. 35.

LET us bear these words of the Lord Jesus on our hearts when we pray; to be assured that He counts it blessedness to give, should encourage us in asking. The words do not say, and do not mean, that it is unpleasant to receive; when the receiver is needy, and the gift good, and the giver generous, it is blessed to receive. Tell it, ye who have come to the Lord wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked, and have received from Him pardon, and peace, and eternal life; tell it to His glory. Is it not a blessed experience to receive? Hark! they tell it who already stand round the throne in white clothing. Thou hast redeemed us, and washed us from our sins in Thy blood; sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. These jubilant hosts who have passed in safety through the Red Sea are not givers, they are only receivers; they are rejoicing with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory; but it is the joy of receiving that swells in their hearts and thrills through their frame. When the Lord intimated that the blessedness of giving was the greater, He did not intimate that the blessedness of receiving was small; He proclaims in one sentence the twofold truth, that the joy of His people in obtaining salvation is great, and His own in bestowing still greater.

REV. W. ARNOT.

 July 2d.

'I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.'—REV. i. 18.

ARE we ready to recoil at the thought of a world of spirits, or to dread to lay us down in death? Then think on the words of the Son of man, 'I have the keys of the grave and of death.' He who died has all power in the unseen state. The Great Shepherd receives the souls of

His dying saints to Himself; and at the last day, with His almighty word, shall call them from the grave, and trample on the power of the last enemy. Are we ready to be discouraged by tribulation in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and apt to faint and be weary at unfavourable or perplexing appearances? Let us think of Him who walks in the midst of His churches, and holds the stars in His right hand; let us meditate on His love, His wisdom, His power, and His faithfulness, and not be cast down. He sits upon the throne of David, and His name is the Mighty God, the Counsellor, and the Prince of peace. Upon that throne, of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; and with zeal He will order and establish His kingdom, with judgment and with justice for ever.

H. D. INGLIS, ESQ.

July 3d.

'Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.'—
Ps. civ. 35.

OH what precious communion might you have with God every time you approach Him, if your heart were but in a right frame! That which loses all our comforts in ordinances and secret duties is the indisposedness of the heart. A Christian whose heart is in a good frame, gets the start of all others who come with him in that duty. They strive hard to get up their hearts to God, now trying this argument upon them, and then that, to quicken and affect them, and sometimes go away as bad as they came. Sometimes the duty is almost ended before their hearts begin to stir, or feel any warmth, quickening, or power from it. But all this while the prepared is at work. This is he who ordinarily gets the first sight of Christ in a sermon, the first seal from Christ in a sacrament, the first communion with Christ in secret prayer. I tell you, and I tell you but what I have felt, that prayers and sermons would appear to you other manner of things than they do, did you but bring better

ordered hearts unto them. You would not then go away dejected and drooping, and saying, Oh, this has been a lost duty to me! If you had not lost your hearts, it would not have been so.

REV. S. FLAVEL.

July 4th.

'And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.'—JOHN i. 5.

O ETERNAL LIGHT! without which we cannot live either in nature or in grace; abide with us, who are surrounded in this wretched world with the night of deception, with tribulation and sins. O Thou Son of light and grace! display Thyself in us in an especial manner, and influence us in particular, when we are about to leave this vale of tears. O Thou who art the Prince of life! we pray that, at the instant when our eyes are to be closed to the light of day, Thou wouldst draw near, and take us by the hand, in order to raise us to the palace of Thy glory, where we shall behold Thee with open face, in expectation of being carried up, body and soul, in the clouds, into Thy presence, on the day of the resurrection of the just. At this Thy last appearing, shalt Thou, O Sun of righteousness, come to be glorified in Thy saints, and to be admired in all them that believe; a terror to unbelievers, attended by all the holy angels, adored by the whole world, in order to bring on Thy wings incorruption and immortality. Thou wilt, by the warmth of Thy divine love, revive the ashes in our tombs, on that great day of the restitution of all things; and wilt, from these very ashes, raise in an instant plants which shall be ever in blossom, and serve as an ornament to paradise itself. By the power of Thy rays Thou wilt draw us entirely unto Thyself, so that, being received into Thy bosom, and immediately united with Thee, we shall be transformed into Thy image, and shine for endless ages as so many suns in the kingdom of the blessed.

EXTRACT FROM FOREIGN DIVINES.

July 5th.

'But his delight is in the law of the Lord : and in His law doth he meditate day and night.'—Ps. i. 2.

LORD, help me to meditate upon Thee, and upon all that Thou hast done for my soul! Oh, put on this garment of salvation, this robe of righteousness, which Thy blessed hands have perfectly wrought, that it may be my wedding garment in the day of my espousals, when I shall leave the world and appear before the majesty on high! This is the righteousness of saints, pure, white, and shining, in which they walk with Thee in glory, and in which I also hope to walk, unworthy creature as I am, both with Thee and with them. Oh, then shall I appear without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, all acceptable to God, all illustrious in Thee! Lord! what hast Thou wrought indeed? Thou hast wrought for me, to entitle me to heaven, and Thou hast wrought in me, to fit me for heaven,—a work, as it seems to me, no less difficult than the other; so stubborn and vile am I, and so opposite to Thy pure nature is mine. I marvel, and with tears of joy I marvel, at all the mysterious wonders of Thy redemption; at Thy plain and clear yet unsearchable love; at Thine awful justice, magnified even of grace itself; at the kindness Thou hast promised; at the never-ending line of wisdom in Thy holy word; and at the unbounded scene of glory yet before me.

A. SERLE, ESQ.

July 6th.

'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?'—JOHN xi. 25, 26.

THE propriety of our future resurrection to life may, I think, be illustrated by attending to the incarnation of our blessed Lord. When He became the Saviour, He became man. 'He took not on Him the nature of

angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.' 'A body was prepared for Him;' a body such as that which we carry about with us; a body liable to the same pains and infirmities as ours, in everything that does not partake of sin. With that body He rose again from the dead, that 'as in Adam all died, so in Christ should all be made alive.' That body He took with Him, when He passed as our forerunner into the heavens. In that body He 'appears in the presence of God for us,' as our advocate with the Father. In that body will He come, even when He comes the second time, without sin, unto salvation; and in that body will He hold intercourse with His people, and be the object of their admiration, and their love, and their praise, through the ceaseless duration of eternity. And is it not to be expected, that this mortal body, which was and is thus honoured and consecrated by the inhabitation of the Son of God, should be rescued from the darkness and noisomeness of the tomb, and brought forth in all its pristine purity, and comeliness, and vigour, and carried up to heaven to mingle in the services and blessedness of those whom Christ has redeemed by the giving of His flesh in sacrifice? And is there not an obvious fitness in our appearing before Him with that nature and in that form which He assumed when He condescended to become our Saviour, which He still retains, and will for ever wear upon His throne of light, and which, as belonging to us, was the object, while, as belonging to Him, it was the instrument, of His redeeming mercy?

REV. DR. THOMSON.

July 7th.

'What must I do to be saved?'—ACTS xvi. 30.

ST. PAUL did not say to the jailor who asked what he must do to be saved, *Feel* that you have Christ in your heart, and you shall be saved; but he said to him, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Are you humbly believing in Jesus Christ as

your only Saviour from sin and wrath, casting all your care and burden upon Him? In a dependence on the divine promises, and in a faithful use of the means of grace, are you going through the duties of your respective stations, living in the fear of God, and seeking daily to please, serve, and honour Him as your reconciled God and Father in Christ? Are you wilfully allowing no sin, habitually indulging no evil temper, no ungodly disposition? Are you walking in Christian holiness, cultivating a spirit of peace and love in yourself and others, doing good to your neighbours, so far as you have opportunity, both in body and soul? Have you these proofs and marks of a truly religious state? Then are you one of the Lord's people, and may justly take to yourself the comforts of Christianity. They belong to you, exercise them in faith. Regard not your frames and feelings. Be not discouraged, because you cannot find in yourself *this* feeling or *that* feeling. Rejoice in the *Lord*; believe His promises, because they are *His*. See what is written, 'He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting life.'

REV. E. COOPER.

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July 8th.

'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.'—
REV. ii. 17.

THE manna is called hidden on two accounts: It had never before been the food of man, and Israel knew not what it was till they were told that it was the bread which God had given them. It was covered by the dew which also lay under it, and melted when the dew was dried up. On this the children of Israel subsisted for forty years. But it was also a mystery; it had a hidden meaning. It was a figure of the flesh of Christ, John vi. 48-54; and two things are very beautiful and striking in the figure: 1st, It was not the ordinary food of man; it was given to Israel in the wilderness, where there was neither earing nor harvest, and was not, like other food,

procured by human labour, according to God's original appointment for fallen man, Gen. iii. 19. So the flesh of Christ, on which the true Israel feed, was not produced like other flesh; a body was prepared in the womb of the Virgin by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost. It was a new thing in the earth, Jer. xxxi. 22; and as Israel fed on the manna for which they had not laboured, we obtain the blessings of Christ's salvation, not by labour, but by faith, John vi. 29. 2d, The manna fell in the dew with which it was encompassed. Now the word of God is compared to dew, Deut. xxxii. 2; and the manna falling in and with the dew represented Christ, who is given to sinners in the preaching of the gospel.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

July 9th.

'But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.'—MAL. iv. 2.

O HOLY JESUS, the morning star, the day-spring from on high, who comes down to visit us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, guide my feet into the way of peace. Arise, O Sun of righteousness, upon my distressed soul, with healing in Thy wings. Show me the way in which I should walk, for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; O raise up my soul out of earthly desires. Quicken my dulness in Thy service. Comfort me in all my sadness. Dispel all those mists of ignorance and error which cloud my understanding. Release my heart from the bondage of sin and Satan, and from the fetters of all temptations unto evil; and so strengthen me to run in the way which Thou hast commanded, that I may obtain that Thou hast promised. Let not persecutions, either of my bodily or spiritual adversaries, rob me of the hope thereof. Let no false suggestions either withdraw my heart from the love of Thy truth, or from the practice of it, in all the actions of

my life; and when the few days of this life are ended, may I inherit that endless life which Thou hast prepared for all who love and fear Thee, through Christ our Lord.

BISHOP SHERLOCK.

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July 10th.

'I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it.'—

Ps. xxxix. 9.

YOU do not see the hand of God in all things. You attribute your misfortunes and disappointments to some creatures around you. They may be the instruments, but the hand that manages them is the Lord's. Go and learn this most useful of all lessons, to ROW SUBMISSIVELY and quietly to the will of God in all things. However this may cross your own inclinations, and mortify the flesh, and disappoint self, yet it should be done. In order to learn this lesson, see that the hand of God is in all your concerns, both small and great; that He acts in all things with infinite wisdom; and always consults your best interest and profit, even when He crosses your works, as well as when He gratifies your desires. Learn, then, for your credit and comfort, to be submissive to the will of Heaven, and say on all occasions, 'It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.' Though He dash your idols, disconcert your plans, and disappoint your hopes; yea, though He ruin your comforts, load you with troubles, and pain your feelings in the most tender points; in the midst of *all*, you should not open your mouth, because it is His doing.

REV. T. JONES.

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July 11th.

'Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord.'—ZECH. vi. 12.

MY soul, listen to the call, and behold this wonderful man, whose name is The Branch. Mark the wonderful

features of His person. This is one of the prophetic names of Him, in the faith of whom, as the Redeemer of Israel, all the Old Testament saints died: The Branch of the Lord,—the Branch of Righteousness; or, as He is elsewhere called, the Nazarene. But observe how very descriptive of His nature is this title. He grows up out of His place. And where is that? In the eternal council of Jehovah. Who shall declare His generation? He is indeed a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch out of his roots; but all this, as the root Himself of David, planted in the eternal purpose of God's own sovereign decree, and budding forth as a Branch in all the periods of His incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, glory. And what a Branch of never-failing loveliness, and everlasting verdure and fruitfulness, in all the proclamations of His gospel, converting sinners and comforting saints! and what an eternal perennial Branch to all His redeemed in grace and glory! Hail! thou glorious, wonderful man, whose name is The Branch. Thou art, indeed, as the prophet described Thee, beautiful and glorious in the eyes of all the redeemed.

REV. DR. HAWKER.

July 12th.

'That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.'—*EPH. ii. 7.*

IF there is the least spiritual life in you, it came not thither by accident, but by the love wherewith He loved you. If the pure minds of the saints need to be stirred up by way of remembrance, what shall be said to the heedless part of the world, who, because they hear of a just and holy God, think of Him with suspicion and dislike? 'O righteous Father!' said Christ, 'the world hath not known Thee.' He who came from the Father, and was in the world, seems, in the close of His farewell prayer, to have summed up His reflections on mankind in these words: 'O righteous Father! the world hath not

known Thee. Did they but know Thee, they could not but love Thee.' All, then, that is asked of you is this : learn to think rightly of God ; your views of all things will then be rectified ; you will acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace.

REV. H. MARTYN.

July 13th.

'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh : and these are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.'—GAL. v. 17.

AT one time the believer gains a victory in the good fight of faith, at another time he suffers a defeat ; but at all times he wishes to be victorious. His desire to be a doer of the word is complete ; but his power of accomplishing that desire is very incomplete. In one respect, however, he differs essentially from every hearer only : he strictly approves of the very strictest requirements of the law of God, and sincerely condemns himself instead of seeking to justify himself by pleading the extreme severity of the law ; he counts not himself to have attained, neither does he think it possible while in the flesh to attain, perfection ; yet still he aims at it, and his renewed soul can rest satisfied with no measure of holiness short of complete conformity to the image of Jesus Christ.

REV. H. M'NEILE.

July 14th.

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.'—JOHN xiv. 27.

THE cross of Christ seen by faith, while it gives rise to our hopes, and to everything that is dear to us, must deepen our repentance. It is in our dying Saviour, in His wounds and agony, that we see the evil of sin and its

malignant nature. Let the scene which took place on Calvary be often in our thoughts. Let the cross be our station. It will keep us humble. It will maintain in us a broken and a contrite heart. We have daily need of repentance, for 'there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not.' We have daily need to be humbled for the sins which we commit, and for the duties we neglect. But, blessed be God! the fountain is ever open. We are freely invited to it. Every fresh application will increase our hatred of sin, and desires after holiness; and thus we will go from strength to strength, and from grace to grace, until we join that multitude which no man can number, who had come out of great tribulation, and had washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and were therefore before the throne of God, serving Him day and night in His temple.

REV. C. WILSON.

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July 15th.

'And Enoch walked with God.'—GEN. v. 24.

THIS is the only way in which we can never go astray; and happy he who, amidst the innumerable paths by which he is surrounded, is led to the proper walk. To walk with God, we must take heed to every step of His providence and His grace,—we must have a holy fear of not keeping close to Him; though He will never leave us, if we do not leave Him. We must maintain a sacred communion with Him, and have our conversation in heaven rather than on earth. We must be perpetually receding from the world, and withdrawing from its attachments. We must feel our hearts glow with a greater degree of love to Him, and by the influence of His Holy Spirit upon our affections, become gradually more assimilated to the divine nature. We must take His word for our directory, His promises for our food, and His blessed Son for our sole reliance, making the foot of the cross our only resting-place.

If we thus walk with God through the wilderness of life, He will walk with us when we reach the dark 'valley of the shadow of death;' and though we cannot hope for the same translation as Enoch, still, like him, we shall not be, because God hath taken us.

DR. J. M. GOOD.

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July 16th.

'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?'—Ps. xxvii. 1.

CHRISTIANITY has two fields; the one is the infinite and unchangeable character of God,—the other is the heart of man; the first is all light, original, uncreated light,—the second in itself is all darkness, but it is created with a capacity of receiving light. The great object of Christianity is to dispel the darkness of the second field, by introducing into it the light of the first. Man may know that there is light in God's field, and he may know something of the colour and qualities of the rays of that light, and yet he may be unvisited by a single ray. He may know about it as a man naturally blind may know about material light. And all the while, though he reasons about it, he has it not, he is in darkness. But why is the heart of man dark? surely it was not so when God pronounced it good. No, it was then light, but it was light merely and solely because it was open to receive the light of God. The creature is all darkness when separated from the Creator,—when shut against Him; and man has separated himself from God, and shut out His light; and never can he have light again, until he opens his heart to receive the light of God. As easily may the eye create light for itself independent of God, as the soul of man create light for itself independent of God. There is no light for a soul but in God; if He is not in thee, the light that is in thee is darkness.

T. ERSKINE, ESQ.

July 17th.

'Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.'—MIC. ii. 10.

'SINCE it pleases God,' the afflicted saint will say, to make it a thorny path to me, and my way to lie through a howling wilderness,—since He hath made my dearest enjoyment shortlived, and caused my fondest schemes to end in disappointment,—since the friends and connections, and situations and circumstances, which I looked forward to in earlier life as desirable above all things, have rather proved occasions of sorrow,—since the selfishness of some, the ingratitude of others, and the persecuting disposition of the ungodly world, added to my inward trials and temptations, leave me but little comfort in this life,—henceforth I will live for another world; from the harassing vexations that assail me, I will flee to the bosom of Him who will be to me 'as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' Blessed be God that He has left so little on earth to enchain my affections,—that He has said to me, Arise, for this is not thy rest! Henceforth, therefore, I desire to live as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth, looking at something beyond the present scene; my heart and affections shall dwell with Christ, in fairer worlds on high. There, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

REV. H. MARTYN.

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July 18th.

'The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.'—Ps. xxxiii. 5.

AS the mind must, in all periods and regions of its existence, receive its happiness from causes exterior to itself, and as it is probable the one supreme cause of that happiness, the Deity, will make a very great part of the happi-

ness which human spirits are to receive from Him, come to them through the medium of His works ;—it is a matter of inexpressible exultation, that those works are so stupendous in multiplicity and magnitude, that they are for all practical purposes infinite. It is with a triumphant emotion that an aspiring spirit, assured of living for ever, trusting in the divine mercy that it shall be happy in that eternity of life, and certain that its happiness must arise from the impressions made on it by surrounding existences,—it is with an emphatic emotion of triumph that such a spirit considers the vastness of the universe, as progressively demonstrated to us by the advances of science, and as attempted to be realized by an earnest and a delightful but still overwhelmed effort of imagination. For it still regards the infinity of things as the scene of its indefatigable and everlasting activity, in which it shall find the millions of contemplated manifestations of beauty and sublimity are but preparing it to advance to new visions, with perceptions for ever becoming more vivid, and delight for ever growing more intense.

REV. J. FOSTER.



July 19th.

'In my Father's house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.'—
JOHN xiv. 2.

IN the journey of life, from time to eternity, there are two ways, and but two ways, and one or the other must be pursued. The one terminates in the prison-house of everlasting death and perdition, and the other in the immortal house not made with hands, the Father's palace of many mansions, of eternal life, and happiness, and glory. No man, aware of the consequences, can possibly, from choice, take the road to destruction. Be not, then, deceived ; for know, if you journey in the way of ignorance, and unbelief, and sin, and guilt, the end will be death.

But if you enter on the way of knowledge, faith, and holiness; if you persevere in that way (and persevere you shall, if you use the aid of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit), you shall in due time ascend to the heavenly house; you shall obtain one of its many mansions, stored with glory, honour, and immortality, and never-ending joy. Awake, then, ye that sleep; arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you life; flee from the wrath to come; lay hold on the hope set before you; let no man take your crown.

REV. DR. JONES.

July 20th.

'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.'—ISA. xxxv. 1.

THIS chapter has been for many ages the song with which the afflicted has beguiled the hours of his affliction; the weary pilgrim's chant in all his passage through the desert world. The wilderness of the first verse, so sad and solitary, has seemed to be his own bosom, and the world over whose promise its blighting has extended. The message of encouragement in the fourth verse has seemed addressed to him in his hours of fearfulness, trial, and oppression. The succeeding promises were a stay amid the stubborn insensibility of men, and the corruption of the abandoned earth. The eighth verse seemed to describe the way of salvation, made plain to the simple in the pure gospel light; and the concluding one, that eternity of unbroken bliss which awaits the redeemed in the mansions of glory.

The prophetic Scriptures are good for me in sadness, for they are full of encouragement; in doubt, for they are full of promise; in carelessness, for they are full of warning; in contrition, for they are full of mercy; nay, they are good for me in every case, for they are full of Jesus.

MISS C. FRY.

July 21st.

'Now, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.'—
1 TIM. i. 17.

AMONG all the awful ingredients which enter into the cup of condemned sinners in the future world, there is none so inconceivably dreadful as the wrath of the Lamb. Therefore every insult which you now offer to the love of Christ, will, as it were, ignite that love, and convert it into a fire which will burn with increasing fierceness throughout eternity. But while I would thus warn you of your danger, I would also proclaim the riches of the Redeemer's grace. That grace, though long despised, is still in your offer. The Lamb in the midst of the throne, is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; the same in the virtue of His sacrifice, in the extent of His power, and in the tenderness of His compassion. He calls and invites you to accept of the offers of pardon and reconciliation. Oh, then, reject not the counsel of God against yourselves! betake yourselves to earnest prayer, and confess your guilt and vileness! cry to God for that Spirit whose office it is to reveal Christ unto the soul! Thus shall you both see the King in His beauty, and be changed into His image. Thus you shall ere long be united to the blessed company which surround the throne of God in the heavenly world, and join with them for ever in singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' REV. J. RUSSEL.

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July 22d.

'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?'—
MATT. xiv. 31.

O THOU of little faith, why then dost thou doubt? Remember how highly thou dishonourest the infinite love and free salvation of Jesus; and how much thou robbest thy own soul of its peace, and of its growth in

grace, by thy weak and little faith. Think upon these things, and entreat the author and finisher of faith to strengthen it in thy soul. But perhaps thou wilt say, How shall I so live upon Christ with my weak faith, that it may grow stronger, and I may get the better of my legal spirit? Here is the remedy; may it be to thee effectual: thou art to look at Christ, God-man, as thy surety, who for thee has wrought out a finished salvation; and whatever He has promised in His word, relating to His salvation, thou art to trust Him for the making of it good, and to depend upon His faithfulness and power to make it good to thee.

'Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed!
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.'

REV. W. ROMAINE.

July 23d.

'Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly;
but the proud He knoweth afar off.'—Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

WHEN a philosopher of old was asked, what God was doing? he answered, that His whole work was lifting up the humble, and casting down the proud; and the Scripture says the same: 'Though the Lord be high, yet He hath respect to the lowly; but the proud He knoweth afar off. God resisteth the proud; but He giveth grace to the humble.' Not because the frame of soul is meritorious of God's grace, but because a humble disposition best serves God's great design of lifting up and glorifying His grace. What are God's ends, from the laying the foundation, to the putting on the top-stone of grace, but just to exalt the riches of grace! This is what He will have magnified to eternity; and it is not pride, but humility of spirit, that suits God's design of exalting the freedom and riches of grace. It is not the legalist, but the evangelist,—not the proud Pharisee, but the poor

publican, who is smiting on his breast, and crying, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner,' that submits to the revelation of grace.

REV. J. SWANSTON.

July 24th.

'But is now made manifest, by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.'—2 TIM. i. 10.

EVERY breath I draw brings me nearer the hour when this world will recede from my view, and proclaim its vanity and vexation. Then, O solemn thought! these states of changeless existence will open to my view, in all their tremendous grandeur and importance. Then, dreadful alternative! the glories of heaven, or the damnation of hell, will be my portion. To which of these am I hastening? What am I? A sinner. What then is my doom? The wages of sin is death. But is there no escape? With the Lord there is mercy, and with Him there is plenteous redemption. O cheering hope! But is it for me? He came into the world to save sinners; He died for the ungodly, and why not for thee? And can He save me? He is able to save to the uttermost. And will He save me? Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. O heavenly intelligence! 'Tis a saying worthy of all acceptation. I am saved by hope. To the throne of grace will I flee,—on the Friend of sinners will I rely,—and in the exercise of faith, love, patience, and obedience, all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

REV. W. JAY.

July 25th.

'But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.'—1 PET. i. 15.

GOD afflicts His people, that His holiness may be communicated here, and blessedness hereafter; by

affliction He makes us partakers, not only of holiness, but of His holiness, the holiness which He approves, which He commands, and hath some resemblance and conformity to His own. It is not that we may possess the holiness of God, but partake of the holiness of God. The lineaments of His image formed in us by the gospel and by afflictions, are as the beams and sparks of His holiness ; the original is in God, the picture of it in the believer, as the light is in the sun, but some splendour of it in the glass upon which it shines. This God works by afflictions, whereby He makes us exercise ourselves more in repentance ; weans us from the flesh, that would alienate us from God ; cleave faster to Christ by faith, who is the spring of holiness ; more earnestly thirst to draw off the fountain, and pursue those things that are heavenly.

REV. S. CHARNOCK.



July 26th.

' Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ ; (by grace ye are saved). '—EPH. ii. 5.

WHILE we endeavour to prepare our way to Christ by holy qualifications, we do rather fill it with stumbling-blocks and deep pits, whereby our souls are hindered from ever attaining to the salvation of Christ. Christ would have us to believe on Him that justifies the ungodly, and therefore He doth not require us to be godly before we believe : He came as a physician to the sick, and doth not expect that they should recover their health in the best degree before they come to Him. The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design, which is to open forth the exceeding riches of grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us freely, Eph. ii. 5-7. It is no affront to Christ, or slighting or condemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to God while we are polluted sinners ; but rather it is an affronting and contemning the saving grace, merit, and fulness of Christ, if we endeavour to make ourselves righteous and holy

before we receive Christ Himself, and all righteousness and holiness in Him by faith; Matt. xi. 28.

REV. W. MARSHALL.



July 27th.

'Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.'—MATT. xvii. 4.

'LORD, it is good to be here.' For where indeed is heaven? Is it beyond the stars? Is it where the seraph strikes his golden harp, or where the palm-trees flourish in eternal youth? Reader, I think it is where the Beloved Son abides, where he reveals Himself fully to the soul. So, then, our knowledge of Him here '*in part*,' is indeed a part of heaven. What a lonely place in itself was this solitary mountain! But as soon as the disciples saw His glory, when He 'was transfigured before them,' they might well say, 'It is good for us to be here!' There are some who are fond of inquiring what sort of an abode heaven is. But what need is there of such inquiries, if we only can be present with the Lord? How much more needful, then, is it for us to inquire whether He is ours, and we are His! He is verily our real heaven, and His nearness to us is our highest bliss. How comfortable are the words, 'It is good to be here!'

REV. DR. F. W. KRUMMACHER.



July 28th.

'He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.'—HEB. vii. 25.

LET us see what manner of support and encouragement faith may fetch from Christ's death for justification; and surely that which hath long ago satisfied God Himself for the sins of many thousands now in heaven, may

very well serve to satisfy the heart and conscience of every sinner now on earth, in any doubts in respect of the guilt of sin that can arise. The apostle, after that large discourse of justification by Christ's righteousness, in the first part of the Epistle to the Romans, and having showed how every way it abounds, in chap. viii., sits down, as it were, like a man over-convinced, as ver. 31 : 'What then shall we say to these things?' We speak as one satisfied, and even astonished with abundance of evidence, having nothing to say but to admire God and Christ in this work ; and therefore he presently throws down the gauntlet, and challengeth a dispute with all comers : let conscience, carnal reason, law, sin, hell, and devils bring all their strength. 'Who is he that shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? who shall condemn?' Paul dares to answer them all, and carry it with these few words, 'It is God that justifies, it is Christ that died ;' 'In all things we are more than conquerors.'

REV. DR. GOODWIN.

July 29th.

'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'—ISA. i. 18.

THERE is far greater power in the blood of Christ to save and cleanse, than in sin to defile and destroy : Rom. viii. 3. The law became weak to do good ; but it hath power to condemn. The strength of sin is the law ; the law gives strength to sin, because, by virtue of the curse of the law, sin reigns and defiles the souls of men, through that righteous curse, 'The soul that sinneth shall die.' But the blood of Christ hath greater power to save, than sin (together with the law) hath to condemn. For the blood of Christ takes away and abolisheth it utterly ; where the blood is applied and brought home, sin itself cannot ruin that soul. The soul is poisoned and corrupted by sin, but the blood of Christ takes away that

poison, and makes the soul pure and holy, as if it had never sinned. Therefore, as to those discouragements, 'I shall never get power against these corruptions,—they will be my ruin;' these are deep reflections on Jesus Christ, as if sin were stronger than He, as if thy sin were more powerful to condemn thee, than Christ is to save thee: John i. 29.

REV. S. MATHER.

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July 30th.

'The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, and the rocks for the conies.'—Ps. civ. 18.

THE Lord has provided for all His creatures a refuge to which they may fly, and has taught them to have recourse to it in time of danger. Man stands pre-eminent in having an impregnable refuge, where he is perfectly safe, and in which he has the word and oath of God, that nothing shall harm him: Heb. vi. 18. But he differs from all other animals in this,—their nature teaches them to fly to their refuge, but man despises and hates his, because it was not necessary for him in his original state. Arrayed in innocence, and made in the image of God, nothing could hurt him; he feared God, and had no other fear. The gold has now become dim, the crown has fallen from his head, but according to the promise of Satan, he is become as a god. He scorns the thought of being entirely indebted to his Creator's mercy, and this is the completion of his ruin and misery. There is balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there; notwithstanding man's rebellion, God has published His name, has declared that He is rich in mercy, having no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He has so loved the world, as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. But to every natural man this doctrine is a stumbling-block and foolishness. He either altogether rejects salvation, or perverts the gospel of the grace of God, so as to make it subservient to his pride.

But when, under the influence of the Spirit, he is made to know the things which are freely given to us of God ; then he values the refuge, he flies to it, and experiences that the name of the Lord is a strong tower, into which the righteous run and are safe.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

July 31st.

‘While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.’—2 COR. iv. 18.

TRY to conceive of that inexpressible peace, combined with an unspeakable energy and ardour of love, which a present God can infuse, and is at this very hour infusing, into happy spirits that encircle the throne ! Even at this point of time, while thou art depressed by saddening thoughts, and the heavy rain-drops only remind thee of the gloom of external nature, there is a joyful assembly raising the ceaseless anthem of praise, which fills with rapture every being that unites in it. Every spirit is absorbed in blissful emotion incapable of satiety, in deep sympathy with the rest, yet supremely fixed on the great original of all their joy. If it were not for space interposed, or perhaps only mortal weakness forbidding, an enrapturing view of the felicity which God imparts to unfallen or restored creatures might this moment burst on thee. These particles of light which have just reached thine eyes, come tinged with a sort of congenial sadness, as they gleam between wintry clouds ; yet only eight minutes since (the calculations of science assure us) did these very particles issue from the glowing sun, the spring of warmth and radiance. Were it ordained that one or more of them should become the organs of disembodied being, and by a reverted flight, not swifter than their journey hither, should bear thee to the orb whence they emanated, fewer moments than

thou hast now occupied in one low circle of anxious thought, would suffice to carry thee into the very focus of our heaven's effulgence. The harp of Uriel, or the full harmony of the spheres, might long before that enchant thy new and finer sense; the glorious companies of the happy might visibly surround thee with smiles of gratulation; amid the cares and dark imaginings of this little scene, there might need but the fall of the grosser frame, the dissolving of this tabernacle, to reveal a world of blissful existence even here.

J. SHEPPARD, ESQ.

August 1st.

'Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.'—

LUKE xxiii. 42.

WHO is this that calls Jesus Lord, now that He is 'despised and rejected of men'? Now that His disciples have forsaken Him and fled? Now that 'they that see Him, laugh Him to scorn'? Now that 'His strength is dried up like a potsherd, and His tongue cleaveth to His jaws, and He is sinking into the dust of death'? Who is he that ascribes to Him a kingdom at this hour and power of darkness? when earth has renounced Him, and the rays of heaven are intercepted, and hell triumphs? Who is he that prays to One that has resigned the power of saving Himself? O man! great is thy faith! Against hope thou believest in hope, and thy hope shall not make thee ashamed. And who is *he*, that from yonder triumphant ignominy disposes of heavenly thrones? Who opens and shuts at His pleasure the gates of heaven, the everlasting doors of the invisible world? Who plucks the trembling creatures as a brand out of the burning, and transports the prisoners of hope into the paradise of God? He on whom help is laid, mighty to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.

REV. DR. HUNTER.

August 2d.

'And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption,'—EPH. iv. 30.

To grieve the Holy Spirit is to sin against our own mercies,—to do violence unto that holy influence by which we are kept unto salvation. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. As a kind and affectionate friend watches over one committed to his charge, so does the Holy Spirit condescend to watch over the true disciples of Christ. All their strength, their wisdom, and their comfort depend on Him,—on Him they cast all their care, knowing that He careth for them, and is able to do for them abundantly above all they can ask or think. It is as if the Holy Spirit were to say, I have undertaken to be your guide ; I am the Comforter promised by the gracious Redeemer. I will guide you with my counsel, and afterwards receive you to glory,—only grieve me not. I will bring the blind by a way they know not ; I will lead them in paths that they have not known ; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight,—these things will I do unto you, and not forsake you,—only grieve me not. I will not be as worldly friends are, uncertain and changeable,—no change in your condition will make any change in my regard ; my love is unchangeable,—only grieve me not. I will anticipate your prayers, and teach you how to pray ; and when you know not what to pray for as you ought, I will give you more abundantly than you can ask,—only grieve me not.

REV. DR. WILSON.

August 3d.

'For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.'—2 COR. v. 21.

IN all doubtings, fears, storms of conscience, look at Christ only and continually ; do not argue it with Satan—

he desires no better : bid him go to Christ, and He will answer him ; it is His office to be our Advocate (1 John ii. 1), to answer the law as our Surety, and justice as our Mediator (Gal. iii. 20). He is sworn to that office (Heb. viii. 20, 21). Put Christ upon it. If thou wilt do anything thyself, as satisfaction for sin, thou renouncest Christ the righteous, who was made sin for thee. Satan may quote and corrupt, but he cannot answer Scripture. So is Christ's word of mighty authority,—Christ foiled Satan with it. In all the Scripture there is not one hard word against a poor sinner stripped of self-righteousness ; nay, it plainly points him out to be the subject of the grace of the gospel, and none else. Believe but Christ's willingness, and that will make thee willing. If thou findest that thou canst not believe, remember it is Christ's work to make thee believe. He works to will and to do of His good pleasure. By grace thou art saved through faith, and that not of thyself ; it is the gift of God. Plead with Him for that gift. Christ is the author and finisher of faith. Put Him to it. Mourn for thine unbelief, which is setting up guilt in the conscience above Christ,—undervaluing the merits of Christ,—accounting His blood an unholy, a common, and unsatisfying thing. Thou complainest much of thyself ; does thy sin make thee look more at Christ, and less at thyself ? That is right : otherwise complaining is but hypocrisy. To be looking at duties, graces, enlargements, when thou shouldst be looking at Christ, is self-righteous and pitiful. Looking at them will make thee proud ; looking at Christ's grace will make thee humble.

REV. T. WILCOX.

August 4th.

'There be many that say, Who will show us any good ? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us.'—Ps. iv. 6.

SIN and sorrow compass me ; though some sweet drops of heavenly consolation at times revive my soul,

yet how often hangs my harp on the willows, and how often is my head bowed down as ears of corn with dew! Lord, Thou hast told me of a blessed rest which remaineth for the people of God; Thou hast drawn me to look up to it, to pant after it; had my soul wings to fly to Thy bosom, how swiftly would I pierce the skies! No timorous dove, darting from the rapacious vulture, seeks so eagerly its covert, as my poor heart should fly from these sublunary evils, to that shadow of Thy wings where is everlasting rest. When shall it yet be, dear Lord, that my weary soul shall find in Thee repose? Hide me in the cleft of the rock; in Thy bleeding side may my sinful soul now find a sole retreat; give me the wings of faith, that I may fly to this relief from the pursuit of divine justice, and a consuming law; and when this clog of earth that weighed down my soul shall be laid in the dust, and my imprisoned spirit disentangled from the clay, then let the wings of love direct my flight to the heaven where Thou art; and, close sheltered by Thy once bleeding side, let me bid an eternal adieu to sin and sorrow. Be patient, my soul, yet a little while, and hope unto the end; He that is faithful and true saith, *'I will give thee rest.'*

REV. T. HAWES.

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August 5th.

'For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.'—2 COR. v. 4.

LONG much, Christians, to be clothed upon with immortality, to put off the filthy rags of time, and earth righteousness, and to be clothed upon with the white robes of the righteousness of the saints. As you would dwell near the fountain here, and be still washing your garments, and offering all your sacrifices in Him who sanctifieth all, so would you pant and thirst for this spotless garment of glory. Glory is nothing but perfect holiness, holiness washed and made clean in the Lamb's blood. Your rags are for the prison, and for sojourning;

when you come to your Father's house, your raiment shall be changed. Therefore, Christians, every one of you aspire higher; sit not down in attainments; forget what is behind, and press forward. Long for the pure stream that watereth the city above. Grace is not in its native place; it is corrupted and mixed here. Heaven is the element of it, and *there* is grace without mixture. Undervalue all your performances, till you be above, where that which is in part shall be done away, where no unclean thing entereth.

Till this blessed time come, you must take up house beside the fountain opened in the house of David; and never look on any piece of inherent righteousness, but see a necessity of dipping it in the Lamb's blood. Cover holiness with Christ's righteousness, and make mention of it only.

REV. HUGH BINNING.

August 6th.

'And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart.'—ZECH. xii. 12.

PRAY for the Spirit of holiness to enable you to 'look upon Him whom you have pierced.' The bitterness of your mourning for Him will, by the quickening Spirit, awaken within you holy gratitude that He should have mourned for you. This grand proof of His love will constrain you to live no longer to yourself, but to Him that died for you, and rose again; the promises of His grace will incite you to cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God; and the words of your God and Redeemer, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy,' will obtain a universal response from every part of your nature. 'Your heart and flesh will cry out for the living God;' look ever upward: the Saviour's address to each of us is, Look unto me, and be ye saved. Never let us turn away from the contemplation of the Saviour's sorrow and the Saviour's glory. By 'looking unto Jesus,' the Christian rises,

like the nautilus, from his dark and native depths, to the pure atmosphere and warm sunshine of another world,—spreads forth his tiny sails of faith, and hope, and love, and is gently wafted over the waters of life by the balmy gales of grace. Onward he glides, beautiful in movement, and joyful in his new existence so long as the heavy waters of this world are excluded : that moment he imbibes them he sinks. Be not conformed, then, dear Christian reader, to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind ; seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

REV. J. STEVENSON.

August 7th.

'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.'—Ps. xxiii. 1.

THEN assuredly there can be no want. In this character He has purchased His sheep, and gathered them into pastures made verdant and abiding, in the plenty of covenant provision ; and willingly and lovingly protects them there, causing them to lie down, and leading them by the still waters. 'The Lord is my shepherd !' Then assuredly nothing shall impair the spiritual life. He is the faithful preserver ; and amidst the various evils which would otherwise prove injurious, He *restoreth* the soul, leading it in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. 'The Lord is my shepherd !' Then, though the valley of the shadow of death may await, and the trouble of spiritual darkness, or the conflict of natural death be endured, these shall be but as the *shadow* of death : the rod and the staff of the shepherd are there ; the *rod* of His authority and power, as the Lord of the sheep ; the *staff* of His promise and Spirit as their portion for ever. No evil need then be feared ; these are the comforts of the exercised soul ; and powers and principalities shall own them, submitting to the rights of the redeeming Lord. 'The Lord is my shepherd !' Then the wilderness shall afford a table, and enemies shall behold the ransomed feeding in the

strength of their God. Anointing shall rest upon them as the consecrated property of the Most High, and they shall drink of an overflowing cup. MRS. STEVENS.



August 8th.

'Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.'—JOHN xiii. 23.

JUDAS may have the sop, the outward privileges of baptism, and the supper of the Lord, but John leaned on Christ's bosom. That is the gospel-ordinance posture in which we should pray, and hear, and perform all duties. Nothing but lying in that bosom will dissolve hardness of heart, and make thee to mourn kindly for sin, and cure a careless spirit, that gangrene in profession. That will humble indeed, and make the soul cordial to Christ, and sin vile to the soul; yea, transform it into the glory of Christ. Never think thou art right as thou shouldst be, a Christian of any attainment, until thou come to this—always to see and feel thyself lying in the bosom of Christ, who is in the bosom of His Father (John i. 18). Come, and move the Father for near views of Christ, and you will be sure to speed. You can come with no request that pleaseth Him better. He gave Him out of His own bosom for that best end, to be held up before the eyes of all sinners, as the everlasting monument of His Father's love. REV. DR. PECKWELL.



August 9th.

'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man; Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.'—Ps. xxxi. 20.

As there are mysteries in the ways of God and His providence, so there are also in the ways of religion and godliness.

As God is a hidden God, so His people are a hidden

people—not only for safety, but for secrecy: they are alive, and yet dead; they have nothing, and yet possess all things; they love themselves, and yet loathe and deny themselves; they are not satisfied with the world, and yet are content with little; they abound in works of righteousness, and yet abhor all righteousness of works.

REV. PHILIP HENRY.

August 10th.

'The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'—NUM. vi. 26.

THE most enlightened, devoted, and comprehensive mind cannot conceive a higher joy on earth than that which He experiences on whom the Lord lifts up the light of His countenance. The most exquisite earthly enjoyments, the tenderest sensibilities of our nature, joined to the highest delights of human friendship and love, are all poor and vain compared with those superior joys which Christ can, and does, bestow on His friends. What love on earth equals His who died for us, and who lives to make intercession for us? Whose excellences of wisdom, equity, tenderness, power, and glory can compare with Christ's? Are we privileged to have access to the Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace? Surely the very prospect of it should excite the liveliest desire after it. The enjoyment of it should make the pleasures of this world for ever worthless and tasteless. Christian reader, lose not your happiness in the mere vanities of time and sense, but seek to rise to the full enjoyment of your amazing privileges!

REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

August 11th.

'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'—EZEK. xviii. 20.

LET no man think lightly of sin, which lays the sinner open to the wrath of God. Let not the sin of our nature,

which wreathes the yoke of God's wrath so early about our necks, seem a small thing in our eyes. Fear the Lord, because of His dreadful wrath. Tremble at the thoughts of sin, against which God has such a fiery indignation. Look on His wrath, and stand in awe, and sin not. Do not think this is to press you to slavish fear. If it were so, one had better be a slave to God with a trembling heart, than a freeman to the devil with a seared conscience and a heart of adamant. But it is not so: you may love Him, and thus fear Him too; yea, you ought to do it, though you were saints of the first magnitude. (See Ps. cxix. 120; Heb. xii. 28, 29.) Although you have passed the gulf of wrath, being in Jesus Christ, yet it is but reasonable your heart shivers when you look back to it: your sin still deserves wrath, even as the sins of others; and it would be terrible to be in a fiery furnace, although by a miracle we are so fenced against it that it could not harm us.

REV. T. BOSTON.

August 12th.

'And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'—
MATT. xxviii. 20.

GOD has formed the soul of man of a leaning, dependent make; and for the healthy growth and joyful development of that soul, it is essential that he should have some object far higher and nobler than himself to spread his desires and delights upon. That object is revealed in the gospel. That object is Immanuel. His divinity is the almighty prop,—able to sustain the adhering soul, so that it shall never perish nor come into condemnation,—the omnipotent support which bears the clinging spirit loftily and securely, so that the whirling temptations which vex it cannot rend it from the Tree of Life; and that the muddy plash which soils and beats into the earth its sprawling neighbours, cannot tarnish the verdant serenity and limpid glories of its flowering head. And just as His divine strength is the omnipotent

prop of the adhering soul, so His divine resources and His human sympathy make Him the all-sufficient object over which each motive and each desire of regenerate humanity may boundlessly diffuse itself. And however delicate your feelings, however eager your affections, and however multitudinous the necessities of your intricate nature, there is that in this heavenly Friend which meets them every one. There are in His unimaginable compassions, and in His benignant fellow-feelings, holds sufficient for every craving tendril and eager clasper of the human heart to fix upon and wreath around.

DR. JAMES HAMILTON.

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August 13th.

'I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies : I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments.'—
Ps. cxix. 59, 60.

RELIGION has a morning as well as a meridian ; religion is progressive, and must have a beginning ; grace grows, and only by exercise ; five talents become ten by the assiduous occupation of them. And it is only by disuse that the most slender endowments do not rise into larger abilities of performance ; only begin the practice of holy living according to the rule of Scripture. Why hesitate from day to day, leaving your families without worship, and your closet without the direction of secret prayer ? Are you not good enough to begin the practice of holy living, or will delay improve you ? Alas ! if we defer entering on religious duties on these or any pretexts, we are likely to stand in unfruitfulness, like the barren tree in the parable, until a holy one and a watcher come by, and pronounce, 'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground ?' Think of such a visitation, ye who delay, on groundless pretences, from time to time the serious commencement of holy living. Conscience cries, *Begin !* the word of God cries, *Begin !* the uncertainty of life admonishes to *begin !* the prospective inquest of the last

day cries, *Begin!* 'Why stand ye all the day idle?' Is there not will and motives enough for instant exertion? Add to your faith, virtue; and to this virtue another; and still pursue others yet unattained.

REV. J. SIEVERIGHT.

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August 14th.

'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.'—1 COR. v. 7.

WE apprehend sin too great to be pardoned,—we think Christ doth so, and measure infinite love with our line, infinite merits with our sins, which is the greatest pride and blasphemy (Ps. ciii. 11, 12; Isa. xl. 15). Hear what He saith, 'I have found a ransom' (Job xxxiii. 24); 'In Him I am well pleased' (Matt. iii. 17). God will have nothing else,—nothing else will do thee good, or satisfy conscience, but Christ who satisfied the Father. God doth all upon the account of Christ. Thy deserts are rejection, wrath, hell. Christ's deserts are acceptance, pardon, life. He will not only show thee the one, but He will give thee the other. It is Christ's own glory and happiness to pardon. Consider whilst Christ was on the earth, He was more among publicans and sinners than scribes and Pharisees, His professed adversaries, for they were righteous ones. It is not, as thou imaginest, that His state in glory makes Him neglectful, scornful to poor sinners. No; He hath the same heart now in heaven. He is God, and changeth not. He is 'the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world' (John i. 29). He went through all the temptations, dejections, sorrows, desertions, rejections (Luke xxii. 44; Matt. xxvi. 38). He hath drunk the bitterest of the cup, and left thee the sweet: the condemnation is out. Christ drank up all the Father's wrath at one draught, and nothing but salvation is left for thee. Thou sayest, 'I cannot believe, I cannot repent.' Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins (Acts v. 31).

REV. T. WILCOX.

August 15th.

'Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.'—CANT. iv. 16.

IN what respects is the Church compared to a garden? Because a garden is taken out of the common waste ground, to be appropriated to a more particular use; so the Church of Christ is taken out of the wilderness of this world. And, indeed, wherein doth the Church differ from other grounds, but that Christ hath taken it in? It is the same soil as other grounds; but He dresses it, and fits it to bear spices and herbs. In a garden nothing comes up of itself but what is planted or set; so nothing is good in the heart, but as it is planted or set by the heavenly Husbandman. Weeds grow naturally in it; so our evil passions in the heart,—nothing grows in the Church by itself, but what is set by the hand of Christ. In a garden nothing is to be planted but what is useful; so the graces in the heart of a Christian are pleasant to God, and profitable to man. In a garden there is a variety of flowers and spices; so are the graces planted in a Christian's heart. We delight in our gardens to walk there; so Christ comes into His garden. Its fountains are sealed up; so its joy a stranger intermeddleth not with. A garden stands always in need of weeding and dressing; so in the Church and the heart Christ has always something to do. If, then, the Church be a severed portion, we should walk as men separated from the world. And let us learn not to despise any nation or person, since God can take out of the wilderness whom He will, and make the desert an Eden.

REV. DR. SIBBS.

August 16th.

'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.'—ISA. xliii. 25.

THE Lord speaks. And oh, what sounds of mercy come from His lips! He whose memory retains every sin we

have committed, more surely and firmly than a sculptured rock or leaves of brass—the great, the infinite God—declares to His guilty Israel, ‘I will not remember thy sins.’ What can this language mean? It means, reader, that the sins which Jehovah pardons are no more to Him when He sits in judgment than as though He had never seen them. It means that the guiltiest, if washed in the Saviour’s blood, are as safe, as secure from final condemnation, as though they had never been stained by one transgression. It is not a respite of which the Lord here tells you; it is an acquittal—a full, an eternal discharge. It is more: it is an act of oblivion. It is the casting of your sins into ‘the depths of the sea.’ It is like the passing of the ocean over a writing on sand. The record is gone; it can never be recalled. Is this language too bold? Then let God Himself explain His mercy. ‘In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found;’ and why? ‘for I will pardon them.’

REV. C. BRADLEY.

August 17th.

‘Have faith in God.’—MARK xi. 22.

O FAITH, faith! thou blessed companion of the children of God! Thy wondrous power deprives the wilderness of its horrors, and the deepest solitude ceases to be solitary under thy guidance! All that earth and heaven possess of beauty is thine, and with the treasures of heights and of depths thou enrichest thy possessors! That which is distant is brought near by thee; thou developest hidden things, and awakenest past events to new life. Thou mergest the gloom of the present into the bliss of the future, and paintest the sky of many a departing sun with the dawning radiance of a better world. In the midst of sublunary changes, thou anticipatest a peaceful paradise. Thou peoplest our bereaved

family circles with holy and heavenly company ; thou dost associate both worlds in close connection, and unitest things past, present, and to come. In thy light the sacred narratives seem acted over again, and our own personal history becomes a sacred record of providence. Thou nourishest us with the promises made to Abraham, sustainest us with the strong consolation of the oath divinely sworn unto Isaac ; thou givest us the staff of Jacob to support our steps ; thou enablest us with Moses' rod to divide the sea, and with David to leap over the wall and rampart ! O faith, faith ! thou doorkeeper of every sanctuary, thou master over all the treasures of God ! may He who is thine Author draw near unto us ; and He who is thy Finisher bend down Himself towards us !

REV. DR. F. W. KRUMMACHER.

August 18th.

'Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding.'—PROV. ii. 3.

O LET me entreat you to seek after this knowledge. If you will seek it, and seek it aright, you will surely find it. Seek to know God,—seek this knowledge of Him in His word. It is in His word that His glory shines, and His perfections are made known to us. Seek it in His house. It is there, especially, that the Lord reveals Himself to those that wait upon Him, and seek His face. *There* He causes His goodness to pass before them, and lifts up upon them the light and favour of His countenance. Seek it especially in prayer and supplication. Call upon Him to make Himself known unto you. There is a special promise for your encouragement : 'If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.' Follow, I beseech you, the divine instruction here vouchsafed to you. Pray for wisdom, pray for understanding in all

necessary things, even that knowledge of Himself, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

REV. E. COOPER.

August 19th.

'Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.'—PROV. iii. 13.

RELIGION, thou art happiness! the joys which thou pourest into the heart, lie not within the reach of any weapon that the hand of man can form. The calm which thou settlest on the soul, the wing of no earthly blast can disturb. The light by which thy children walk, is the candle of the Lord, which can never be quenched. Thou plantest a torch for them in the gloom of death's darkness, and supportest their goings on the rod and staff of the Almighty. Thou conductest their spirits to the feast of immortality, and layest their bodies down to sleep in peace till the morning of the resurrection. Woe unto him that seeketh his happiness apart from thee! He shall be miserably disappointed.

REV. R. POLLOK.

August 20th.

'According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.'—EPH. i. 4.

'We love Him, because He first loved us.'—1 JOHN iv. 19.

MANY questions may be asked, how the doctrine of election is consistent with the doctrine of human accountableness? which we readily confess we cannot answer; but we cannot answer them, not because the one doctrine is in fact inconsistent with the other, but because from our ignorance we cannot understand their consistency. We fully believe they are consistent, because both doctrines are taught in Scripture, and we have the most

decisive evidence that the Scriptures contain a revelation of the will of God to man. Bowing then to this authority, we believe that every one of the redeemed of God will acknowledge with holy gratitude through eternity, that it was because he was the object of his heavenly Father's electing love, that he was rescued from condemnation, and interested in the blessedness of the world of glory; while those who heard the gospel and rejected it, will be conscious of personal guilt in doing so, and that it was owing to their deliberate rejection or their sinful neglect of offered mercy, that they were not partakers of the great salvation.

'The work which His goodness began,
The arm of His strength will complete;
The promise is yea and amen,
And never was forfeited yet.'

REV. W. INNES.

August 21st.

'Sanctify them through Thy truth.'—JOHN xvii. 17.

WHILE yet upon earth, our dear Lord commenced that work of intercession for the sanctification of the Church, which He ascended up on high more fully to carry on. This was the burden of His prayer, and it forms the blessed spring of our holiness,—'Sanctify them through Thy truth.' And not only would He leave it, as it were, a model of the intercession of His exalted priesthood, but, for our encouragement, He would afford an evidence of its success. To Peter, about to pass through a severe temptation, He says, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.' Nor did his faith fail; it was sifted, it was severely shaken, it was powerfully tried, but it *failed not*; not a particle of the pure gold was lost in the refining: not a grain of the pure wheat in the sifting; and why? because Jesus had interceded, and His intercession was all-prevalent. Oh the vast, the costly blessings that flow into the soul from the inter-

cession of Christ! never shall we know the full extent of this until we pass within the veil. We shall then know the secret of our spiritual life,—of all our supports, consolations, and victories; why it was that the spark in the ocean was not quite extinguished; and that ‘out of the depths’ we were enabled to cry, ‘Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.’ The secret will then disclose itself—the intercession of Jesus our great High Priest. REV. O. WINSLOW.

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August 22d.

‘Come, ye blessed of my Father.’—MATT. xxv. 34.

AT that day the Redeemer will say to His people, ‘Come,’ ‘Come!’—that is, He will call them to be for ever with Him where He is. In His last prayer He said, ‘Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory;’ the day will now be come, when this shall be accomplished for them all. All who ever believed in Him and loved Him will in that day hear Him say, ‘Come.’ He will invite them then to be in His presence, and to share in His glory for ever. The Saviour in whom they believed, and in whom they had learned to trust; that gracious Saviour who once atoned for them, and was their advocate with the Father; who bore with all their provocations, and sent down to them His Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify and perfect them; who watched over them with more than a parent’s tenderness, and more than the faithfulness of a brother; that Saviour who has given them so many mercies even now in the time of their probation,—will then invite them to be with Him for ever. And in His presence there will be a joy proportioned to their excellence, and proportioned to their gratitude. They will then understand and see His glory; they will then feel and estimate His love; and to be present with Him will be—Heaven.

HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL.

August 23d.

'And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'—GEN. iii. 15.

How wondrous the compassion of God to fallen men ! He left him not to despair ; He slew him not in his sin ; He pitied, He pardoned. See in this first promise, O my soul, how unwilling the Lord is that we should perish ! A beam of light and hope breaks through the darkness, and revives the guilty soul of man ; he saw and believed ; and shall I now be faithless ? The true light hath shined, the Sun of righteousness is arisen with healing in His wings ; I see Him not through a glass darkly, but as it were face to face, beholding the promise fulfilled by His appearing in the fulness of time. What confidence, then, my soul, should inspire thee, when here before thine eyes thou seest the serpent's head bruised by the woman's seed ! O Saviour, let me adore Thy grace, and rest satisfied in the glorious victory Thou hast obtained ! Thou wast manifested to destroy the works of the devil ; oh, fulfil in me this great design of Thy coming ! bring near Thy cross to my heart, and bruise at Thy feet whatever is serpentine and diabolical in this fallen nature ! make me to know, by experience of the effectual working of Thy mighty power, that Thou art this promised seed ! Let me stand a monument of Thy grace on earth, and bring me, as a trophy of Thy victory, to heaven !

REV. T. HAWEIS.

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August 24th.

'The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'—CANT. ii. 13.

THE believer has his winter seasons of providential affliction and of spiritual distress. At such periods his

views are occasionally dark, and his comfort liable to a temporary chill. Yet, if the God of love is ever peculiarly near to His people for good, it is when His arrows stick fast in them, and when His hand presseth them sore. 'Behold, God is in this place, and I knew it not,' was the retrospective experience of Jacob. While the spiritual winter lasts, be it thy endeavour to exercise what a late excellent person terms 'the winter graces of faith and patience.' At the time appointed thy consolations shall return, as the clear shining after rain; and thy joy be as the sun, when it goeth forth in its might. Then will be realized that elegant and reviving delineation of inward summer and prosperity of soul: the winter of doubts and darkness, of pain and sorrow, of affliction and temptation, of coldness and barrenness, of storm and tossing, is past; the rain of weeping and distress is over and gone. The flowers of peace and holy rejoicings appear on the earth: the time of the singing of birds, when the graces shall be all alert and lively, and thou shalt pray and praise with enlargement, is come; and the voice of the turtle, the still small music of the Holy Spirit's voice whispering peace to the conscience, is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs (fruitfulness in every good word and work shall evidence thy revival in grace), and the vines with the tender grapes impart their fragrancy; the amiable and benevolent tempers, accompanied by all the other lovely effects of communion with God, shall justify thy faith to the world, and visibly adorn thy profession of the gospel of Christ.

REV. A. TOPLADY.

August 25th.

'All things are possible unto Thee.'—MARK xiv. 36.

CEASE from all unbelieving reasonings, all proud objections. If you are conscious of your need of pardon; if above all things you desire pardon; if you despair of doing anything whatsoever to deserve pardon; if you

are really willing to receive pardon as guilty, condemned, helpless, dying men, then you are as much warranted as sinners can be to go in Christ's name to the mercy-seat, and to take this complete and eternal pardon as your own. To you, as well as the proud in heart, God says, 'Put me in remembrance. Let us plead together.' Tell me not for ever of thine unfitness for my kingdom, thy rebellion and thy crimes. Tell me of all my invitations to the guilty, and all my promises to the lost. Tell me of the blood that was shed to save thee. Tell me of the tears, and prayers, and righteousness, the cross and passion of my Son. Show me that thou canst trust my word. Only believe, and though thou wert as sinful as the cursing Peter, or as unworthy as the blaspheming Saul, 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.'

REV. C. BRADLEY.

August 26th.

'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.'—PHIL. iii. 8.

WHAT a blessing would the gospel prove, if all who are in trouble and distress could bring home to their mind the motives here suggested by St. Paul! How light would be our affliction, if we could turn from them to the bright anticipations of the great day! What a source of never-failing consolation does such a subject present to us, if we believe in His name! Are we then living in such communion with Christ, that we may hope to die in the Lord? The life which we now live in the flesh, do we live by the faith of the Son of God? Have we come to Him as guilty sinners to their Redeemer? have our hearts been created anew by His power? and under the guidance of His Holy Spirit, are we seeking daily for a more perfect conformity to His likeness? Unless we possess that character, and are influenced by these desires, comfort the Scripture gives us none; but

if we are indeed living to Him who died for us, by faith in His blood, by obedience to His laws, then may we appropriate to ourselves the consolations of the gospel, not doubting that to us, as well as to all the faithful servants of Christ, is the assurance held forth, that we shall attain to the resurrection of the just, and enter into the joy of the Lord.

'Without one thought that's good to plead,
O what could shield us from despair,
But this—though we are vile indeed,
"The Lord our righteousness is there!"'

REV. DR. DEALTRY.

August 27th.

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.'—JOHN xiv. 27.

YOU who have found the peace-making virtue of the blood of atonement, must not be satisfied with what you have already known or enjoyed. The only way to be constantly happy, and constantly prepared for the most awful change which we must all experience, is to be constantly *looking* and *coming* to a dying Saviour ; renouncing all our own worthiness ; cleaving to the loving Jesus as our all in all, begging that of His fulness we may receive 'grace upon grace ;' whilst our faith actually relies on His power and faithfulness for the full accomplishment of every promise in His word that we plead with Him, and guarding against everything that might for a moment bring distance and darkness between your souls and your precious Lord. If you *thus live* (and oh that you may daily receive fresh life from Christ *so* to do!), the peace of God will keep your hearts and minds, and 'you will be filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.'

REV. S. PEARCE.

August 28th.

'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'—ROM. x. 10.

FAITH takes the word of God by a particular application of it with the heart: insomuch that it is a cordial apprehension, a cordial assent that is given to the word: 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.' Saving light goes to the heart. Many have only their heads enlightened, their judgments informed, but not their hearts engaged, nor their affections captivated. Faith is a cordial applying the word, and that particularly to the man's own benefit; whether we call it assurance or not, it comes to the same thing. As when, in conviction, the threatening is applied, the man trembles under the fear of hell and wrath, because he applies the law threatening to himself, saying, 'I am the man to whom this threatening is spoken;' so in the day of conversion, or believing, the promise is applied, the man is relieved with the view of the grace and mercy of God in Christ, because he applies the gospel promise to himself, saying, 'I am the man to whom this promise is spoken, and I receive and rest upon Christ for salvation, as He is promised or offered to me in this gospel—to me in this word of salvation.' And if the man did not take it to himself, there would be no end of believing at all.

REV. R. ERSKINE.

 August 29th.

'But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.'—HEB. xi. 6.

WITH what firm and exalted expectation, when we plead a promise, may we add, 'Do, O Lord, as Thou hast said!' Do we need, and do we ask forgiveness? It is absolutely promised to those who seek it by faith in the great propitiation. Do we ask the renovating and consoling influence of the Holy Spirit? It is repeatedly

promised. Do we ask assistance for every duty and for every trial? It is explicitly promised. Do we ask victory over every enemy, not excepting the last? It is most graciously promised. With what confidence, then, and delight, should we ever resort to the throne of grace; and with what enlivened expectation should we return, after presenting our requests! Whenever the word 'Amen' closes the series of our petitions, we should yield our hearts to the full and animating assurance, that 'God is faithful who hath promised.'

REV. H. F. BURDER.

August 30th.

'For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.'—Ps. xc. 4.

To us one day may seem a thousand years; to God a thousand years are but as one day. A little more, or a little less, of pain or pleasure; a life longer or shorter by a few years, are differences which disappear at once in the presence of eternity. Say that, at some time within these last hundred years, two friends died, the one twenty years before the other: to the survivor that interval seemed long and tedious; to us now looking back upon the whole, it seems trifling; and more so to them: they are met again, and no trace of it is to be seen. A sick man who passes a night without sleep, thinks that night to be without end; but the night in reality is no longer than another; and when it is gone he himself will be convinced of it. Life rolls along like a torrent,—the past no more than a dream; the present, when we think we have fast hold of it, slips through our hands, and mingles with the past: and let us not vainly imagine that the future will be of another quality; it will glide by with the same rapidity. You have seen the waves of the ocean passing each other to the shore; you then beheld an emblem of human life,—days, months, and years crowd forward in like manner. Yet a little

while, yet a few moments, and all will be at an end : ' The things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.' BISHOP HORNE.



August 31st.

' The Lord is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I hope in Him.'—LAM. iii. 24.

WHEN subjected to the multifarious ills which flesh is heir to, what is there to uphold our spirit, but the discoveries and the prospects that are unfolded to us by revelation? What, for this purpose, can be compared with the belief, that everything here below is under the management of infinite wisdom and goodness, and that there is an immortality of bliss awaiting us in another world? If this conviction be taken away, what is it that we can have recourse to, on which the mind may patiently and safely repose in the season of adversity? Where is the balm which I may apply with effect to my wounded heart, after I have rejected the aid of the almighty Physician? Impose upon me whatever hardship you please ; give me nothing but the bread of sorrow to eat ; take from me the friends in whom I had placed my confidence ; lay me in the cold hut of poverty, and on the thorny bed of disease ; set death before me in all its terrors,—do all this, only let me trust in my Saviour, and pillow my head on the bosom of Omnipotence, and I will fear no evil! I will rise superior to affliction ; I will rejoice in my tribulation. But let infidelity interpose between God and my soul, and draw its impenetrable veil over a future state of existence, and limit all my trust to the creatures of a day, and all my expectations to a few years, as uncertain as they are short, and how shall I bear up, with fortitude or with cheerfulness, under the burden of distress? Or where shall I find one drop of consolation to put into the bitter draught which has been given me to drink? I look over the whole range of this wilderness in which I dwell, but I see not one covert

from the storm, nor one leaf for the healing of my soul, nor one cup of cold water to refresh me in the weariness and the faintness of my pilgrimage. REV. DR. THOMSON.

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September 1st.

'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God : and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.'—REV. xx. 12.

I KNOW not who of you have your names written in the book of life, nor can I tell if this be known to the angels which are in heaven. While in the land of living men, you are under the power and application of a remedy which, if taken as the gospel prescribes, will renovate the soul, and altogether prepare it for the vigour of immortality. Wonder not, then, with this principle of uncertainty in such full operation, ministers should feel for you ; or angels should feel for you ; or all the sensibilities of heaven should be awake upon the symptoms of your grace and reformation ; or the eye of those who stand upon the high eminences of the celestial world, should be so earnestly fixed on the every foot-step and new evolution of your moral history. Such a consideration as this should do something more than silence the infidel objection. It should give a practical effect to the call of repentance. How will it go to aggravate the whole guilt of our impenitency, should we stand out against the power and the tenderness of these manifold applications, the voice of a beseeching God upon us,—the word of salvation at our very door,—the free offer of strength and of acceptance sounded in our hearing,—the Spirit in readiness with His agency to meet our every desire, and our every inquiry,—angels beckoning us to their company,—and the very first movements of our awakened conscience drawing upon us all their regards and all their earnestness !

REV. DR. CHALMERS.

September 2d.

'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee.'—Ps. lxxiii. 25.

A REAL Christian's heart cries, 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee.' He knows that his flesh and his heart will one day fail; but nevertheless, 'God is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever.' While he continues in this world, he is far from being what he wishes to be. He has the earnest of the Spirit indeed; but he has an ambition which this world can never gratify. Its pleasures, honours, riches, he views with the eyes of a stranger. He sighs for that glorious redemption and liberty which he looks for above. Here he daily is burthened, and the most trying of all his burthens is his own corrupt nature. But he looks forward to a glorious day, when he shall behold his Saviour in righteousness. He expects to see Jesus, who at present sustains him with aid unseen, comforts him with promises of future good, and undertakes to guide him, unworthy sinner as he is, to glory. And if a taste of His pardoning love, and a glimpse of the light of His countenance, be so pleasant now, what will it be to enjoy the fulness of these things hereafter! This, then, is the support of a truly Christian character.

REV. J. MILNER.

 September 3d.

'Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.'—PHIL. iii. 12.

How difficult, duly considered, is the Christian's passage through life! How marvellous his safe arrival in heaven! It appears, indeed, to be nothing else than one of the greatest continued wonders of almighty goodness to man.

If a man were commanded to put to sea by himself in a

small open boat, without any sustenance but what might fall from the skies, and with no direction but a chart and compass, and thus to pass over a wild and tempestuous ocean, some faint picture might be formed of the Christian's voyage to heaven. He, too, in a feeble bark, has no chart but the word of God, no compass but the Spirit of God, no provision but the daily grace of God in Christ ; no safety from the raging waves of the world, or the roaring wind of the evil spirit, but the power of God ; no ability to keep himself for one moment from sinking, but through the faith which God supplieth ; and no hope of getting safe to the heavenly shore, but from the truth of God in Christ Jesus. Indeed, when a Christian considers all these perils on the one hand, and his own weakness on the other, it seems an act of the most astonishing love and omnipotence that he should ever reach the kingdom of heaven.

A. SERLE, ESQ.

September 4th.

'In God is my salvation and my glory : the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.'—Ps. lxii. 7.

THE only placid and sound tranquillity, the only solid, firm, and perpetual security, is to be delivered from the tempests of this restless scene ; to be stationed in the port of salvation ; to lift up the eyes from earth to heaven, and to be admitted into the favour of the Lord. Such a man approaches, in his thoughts, near to his God ; and justly glories, that whatever others deem sublime and great in human affairs, is absolutely beneath his notice. He who is greater than the world, can desire nothing, can want nothing from the world. What an unshaken protection, what a truly divine shelter, fraught with eternal good, it must be, to be loosed from the snares of an entangling world, and to be wafted into the light of immortal day ! When we see what the insidious rage of a destructive enemy was plotting against us, certainly we must be more compelled to love what we shall be, because we have now learned both to know and to condemn

what we were. Nor is there, for this end, any need of price, of canvassing, or of manual labour. This complete dignity of man is not to be acquired by elaborate efforts : the gift of God is gratuitous and easy. As the sun shines freely, as the fountain bubbles, as the rain bedews, so the celestial Spirit infuses Himself.

CYPRIAN.



September 5th.

'For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.'—MATT. xxv. 35, 36.

LEARN then, O Christian, to value this life as an opportunity of honouring God, very short indeed, but very precious ! We are too apt not to discover the value of opportunities till they are lost. We lament that we live in a world of sorrow and sin, and we hope soon to be admitted into a more pure and holy residence. But, when admitted there, if anything could give us pain, it would be to consider how many opportunities once possessed of honouring God, are now irretrievably lost. *There* will be no sick to visit, no naked to clothe, no afflicted to relieve, no weak to succour, no faint to encourage, no corrupt to rebuke, or profligate to reclaim. A new sphere of virtues will present themselves ; brighter, indeed, and more glorious than those which presented themselves on earth, but not affording such opportunities for manifesting the love we bear to God. Happy are they who labour while it is called to-day.

REV. J. VENN.



September 6th.

'And hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.'—ROM. v. 5.

HOPE is given us for our consolation, and consolation is intended for those who need it. The nature of this

heavenly grace implies that we are at present subjected to trials, which prove and exercise our faith ; which are sufficient to arouse and invigorate the mind, but never to overwhelm it. The Christian's path is beset with snares ; and happy, happy they who, at the close of life, when they cast their eyes backwards, can behold the trace of suffering, but not of sin. Fears and anguish of heart are indeed the proper consequences of guilt, at once its punishment and its cure ; the tears that flow from any other source are only yielded to the infirmity of our nature. And these are quickly wiped away, where the heart is right with God. For patience, courage, and fortitude are as essential to the character of a complete Christian as the fairest graces of piety. We dishonour God if we distrust His faithfulness ; we deny our Redeemer if we are afraid 'to take the cross, and follow after Him.' The road is not long, and leads direct to heaven. How can we think it sad, when we recollect who it is that sustains, and whither He conducts us !

J. BOWDLER, ESQ.

September 7th.

'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble : therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea ; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.'—Ps. xlv. 1-3.

BLESSED for ever and ever be that mother's child whose faith hath made him the child of God ! The earth may shake, the pillars of the earth may tremble under us, the countenance of the heavens may be appalled, the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory ; but concerning the man that trusted in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable as much as to singe a hair of his head ; if lions, beasts ravenous by nature, and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have, as it were, religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man : what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the

affection of God to him? If I be of this note, who shall make a separation between me and my God? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No; I am persuaded that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword, nor death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall ever so far prevail over me. I know in whom I have believed; I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me; I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power: unto Him I commit myself. HOOKER.

September 8th.

'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'—
HEB. iv. 16.

HERE I have no abiding city; as a tenant at will, I may be dismissed at a minute's warning: but I have an immortal soul, a soul that must join angels in glory, or fiends in darkness. How weighty, then, is the concern of salvation! and how important each moment that shortens the span allotted me below! When I look within myself, how far from salvation does my state appear! A sinner I, vile and abominable, in practice a transgressor times beyond number; under guilt which I cannot remove, under corruption I cannot subdue, under wrath I cannot avert; and such wrath as is for ever wrath to come. When I look to God, what can I expect? holy in His nature, and therefore infinitely removed from sin; just, and therefore bound to punish it; unchangeable, and therefore punishing eternally; omnipotent, there can be no resistance; omniscient, and therefore no escape from His notice. Who shall deliver me? Behold me, saith the Saviour; I am He that bringeth salvation, salvation to the uttermost, mighty to save. Atoning blood shall sprinkle the throne of justice, eternal wisdom shall guide

thy steps, and almighty power strengthen. My salvation is near, I bring it to thee in my word, I seal it to thee with my blood, and will accomplish it in thee by my Spirit for ever. Do so, Lord; if Thou wilt save, none can destroy.

REV. T. HAWEIS.

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September 9th.

'And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'—MATT. xxv. 40.

THE *poor in spirit*, those who are sensible of their own sinfulness and unworthiness; who by a righteousness imputed, making that the only ground of their hope; and who, from love to the truth, and to Christ as revealed by it, perform good works with a view to the glory of God, not in the least expecting admission into the eternal kingdom for the sake of their pious performances; those who say not a word about anything which they have done,—are accepted by the Judge of all into everlasting honour and joy. Let the legalist be cautioned by this not to trust in his own duties, though of the most splendid kind; and let all who *love the truth* be encouraged to abound in every instance of duty and gratitude to God; especially in that of communicating to the necessities of the *poor brethren* and indigent members of Christ. For the Judge will say to them on His right hand, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' What condescension is here! Christ is not ashamed to own the very meanest of His people under the character of brethren.

REV. A. BOOTH.

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September 10th.

'And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.'—REV. iv. 3.

JOHN, beholding the divine glory as it issued in all its purity and intensity from the everlasting throne, saw also

that throne encircled by the bow of mercy, in sight like unto an emerald. His eye, fatigued, dazzled, and darkened with excess of light from the consuming radiance of God's other perfections, reposed with ease and delight upon the refreshing hue prevailing in the arch of peace. Noah beheld the same sign of mercy after the devouring flood had abated. It is our privilege spiritually to regard the same symbol in the sacrament of our Saviour's love, and to rejoice in the triumph which that love has achieved over the consuming righteousness of a God avenging sin. His wrath, indeed, is revealed against all iniquity; but His mercy rises at the same moment upon the penitent offender, and speaks peace to his heart, as of old to Noah and to John. At first the young inquirer into religion looks almost despondingly to the darkness and rain, apprehending the deluge of anger and judgment; and cries, O WRETCHED *man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But immediately afterwards he turns, and fixes upon the bow of the Saviour's mercy; and there beholding the unbounded provision of goodness made for his salvation by the very Being whom he has offended, gives expression to his gratitude and wonder in the rapture of the apostle, 'I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.

REV. R. P. BUDDICOM.



September 11th.

'Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all he had, and bought it.'—MATT. xiii. 46.

THERE is but one such pearl (though every one may have that one), since the truth is one even as God is one; and the truth possessed restores that unity into the heart of man which sin had destroyed. That which through sin had become as a mirror shattered into a thousand fragments, and every fragment reflected some different object, is now reunited again, and the whole with more or

less clearness reflects, as it was intended at first to do, the one image of God. It is God alone in whom any intelligent creature can find its centre and true repose ; only when man has found *Him* does the great *Eureka* burst forth from his lips, in Augustine's beautiful words, 'Lord, Thou hast made us for Thee, and our heart is disquieted till it resteth in Thee.'

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.



September 12th.

'Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit ; and watching thereunto, with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.'—EPH. vi. 18.

THE ability of Christ to succour the tempted, supposes that we habitually ask aid. If under our temptations we be remiss in our attendance at the throne of grace ; if we look to other quarters for deliverance ; if we trust to endeavours of our own for victory, can we wonder if we are wounded, and fall in the conflict ? Let us earnestly and constantly apply to our all-sufficient Saviour, and that as the faithful and merciful High Priest, who had the experience of temptations. On the very first assault this measure may put a stop to their progress ; in their most melancholy prevalence and success, it may retrieve our affairs. Without this resource, whatever we do against temptations is not striving lawfully, and shall not obtain the crown. But, while 'instant in prayer,' what shall be able to prevail against us ? Never did a soul sink under temptation, which, in the apprehension of danger, cried, with the faith and hope of deliverance, to the Lord Jesus Christ. What encouragement is presented to us in His gracious qualifications ! He is faithful ; He is merciful ;—He is therefore able : able to know when succour is necessary ; able to compassionate the case of the afflicted, and tossed with tempest ; able to afford the help that will prove efficacious, and finally triumphant.

REV. G. EWING.

September 13th.

'For Thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.'—Ps. xviii. 28.

THE Christian feels he is still weighed down by the sleep of worldliness, and the dreams of earthly things. He is feeling and exclaiming, with all the impression of fresh lights, 'I am but half awake; oh for more life, more zeal, more love to God, more devotedness to Christ!' Yes, my brethren, I speak the mind of many a Christian when I say, our dulness in the things of God is our continual burden; we groan under our spiritual insensibility. The confession and the prayer of the believer is,—*My soul cleaveth to the dust; quicken Thou me, according to Thy word.* Oh that I could constantly realize the presence and the love of my blessed Lord and Saviour! Oh that I could always perceive clearly and fully the unsearchable riches of His grace, and the completeness of my soul in Him! I find a spiritual drowsiness ever and anon creeping upon me; I resist it, but still it prevails again and again; and of those things which I feel to be the things of supreme and eternal magnitude, I am often losing sight. Be comforted, O believer; your time of darkness will not last long. Soon the light of glory will come. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will shine in full splendour upon your soul. Soon what is *sown in weakness shall be raised in power*, and what is sown a *natural body will be raised a spiritual body*; and as *you have borne the image of the earthly*, you shall bear *the image of the heavenly*.

REV. E. BICKERSTETH.

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September 14th.

'In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.'—JOHN xiv. 2.

WHY should not all be walking to heaven under the conduct and guidance of Jesus Christ? When God has

condescended to make the way so clear for us, and has sent an angel to go before us, and bring us to the place which He has prepared, and that angel His own eternal Son ; what strange infatuation is it, that any should refuse to walk under the conduct of such a leader to such a home ! Only think, you who neglect this Saviour, what your true condition is. You have a load of guilt upon you, enough to sink you into hell. You are at a distance from God, and you know you are not fit to die. Behold, Jesus has died to remove your guilt ; believe in Him, and it shall not be imputed to you ! What a wonderful company are those that follow Christ ; a multitude of sinners to whom there is no condemnation ! Once enemies to God and holiness, now willing servants of Christ, gladly receiving the law at His mouth, and going after Him to heaven ! Oh, my dear friends, join this little flock ! You will never know what happiness is till you do so ; and if you once receive Jesus into your hearts, you will never repent of it. Christ will be the joy of your hearts on earth, and the glory of your eternity in heaven.

REV. J. FAWCETT.



September 15th.

'That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'—1 PET. i. 7.

CHILD of affliction, if you are mourning in Zion, happy, blessed is your lot, the joy of escape is not only before you ; the blessedness of the dawn after the night is not only in prospect ; the rising of the sun in brilliancy and fervid warmth, after the brooding storms of affliction and of sorrow, is not only your delightful anticipation ;—the expectation of greater holiness, more entire devotedness to the will of God, more zeal, more love, more consistency in His service, is justly and properly yours ; the confidence that the result of the trial will be to make you

live less to yourself and more to Christ, is truly your own in sufferings. And thus may you buoyantly ride upon the wildest tossings, the most threatening billows of this troublous world, with the happy confidence that 'the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire, shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'

Bow then, not only with cheerful resignation, but with holy, heavenly joy, to all the afflictive dispensations of your covenant God.

REV. D. T. K. DRUMMOND.

September 16th.

'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'—
Ps. cxxxvii. 4.

THE formalist, considering 'seven times a day' to be an infringement of the sacred canon, 'Be not righteous overmuch,' pays his customary service twice a day. He says his prayers, and he says his praises too, and his conscience slumbers again. And it is sad to think that there should be times of slumber with the Christian, when he little differs from him. Oh let us be alarmed at every symptom of such a state, and 'find no rest to our spirit,' until we have regained something of the frame of hearty and overflowing praise! If there be a heavenly nature, there must be a heavenly heart. Tongue and heart should be set on fire by love. But the Christian sometimes feels that he must not praise. He has not sensible tokens of love to call him forth, and therefore his harp is suffered to 'hang upon the willows,' and he cares not to take it down even to 'sing one of the Lord's songs in this strange land.' But how little does he remember, that this service of praise is the most successful means of resistance to the despondency of unbelief! Many have found with Bunyan, 'When I believe and sing, my doubtings cease.'

REV. C. BRIDGES.

September 17th.

'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.'—

1 JOHN IV. II.

WHAT measures of holy love have I,—of that love which puts forth its energies in such characters, as the exemplification of that charity which endureth all things! Do I so love God, and feel such a sense of His love to me, as to have my soul transformed into His divine temper? Does the love of Christ thus constrain me? Am I so absorbed in the contemplation of that stupendous display of divine benevolence, that unparalleled manifestation of infinite mercy which was made on the cross of the Son of God, as to find the selfishness of my nature melted, and all its enmities subdued, by this most amazing and transporting scene? I feel that without love I cannot have entered into the meaning and design, the moral form and beauty, of the great atonement; that I see here no disposition which properly corresponds to that august and interesting spectacle. I see that knowledge is not enough, that belief is not enough, that ecstasy is not enough, that hope is not enough; that, in fact, nothing can come up to the demands, to the spirit, to the design of a religion which has the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ for its central object, and great support, and distinguishing glory,—but a temper of universal and practical benevolence. Have I this? If so, how much of it?

REV. J. A. JAMES.

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September 18th.

'This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy word hath quickened me.'—Ps. cxix. 50.

GOD sanctifies affliction to the increase of obedience. There is much in the heart of many a true Christian which is inconsistent with his principles, many an unsubdued temper, many a hard thought of God, many a

rebellious lust. Entire submission to God is a difficult lesson. We strive and struggle against Him for this and the other indulgence, and labour fruitlessly in a variety of ways to make some sinful gratification tenable with present religious peace, and a prosperous hope for the future. But God will not suffer this. And He makes His people therefore 'learn obedience by the things which they suffer.' The very object of their excessive affection often brings them into trouble. Their bitterest portions are distilled out of the fairest flowers they rear. And at last, in a series of corrective trials, the Redeemer teaches His people that their happiness lies not in resisting, but in yielding; for, till the subject of controversy is actually given up by the soul, the mercy of God will not suffer it to rest in peace. But when the moment of submission arrives, and the afflictive dispensation is made effective of its object, then is the time for real peace. It is then found delightful to bend under the will of God, and to choose only those things which are consistent with His will. And if there is a gratifying sight on earth, it is the afflicted but submissive Christian. It is the sight of him that glorifies God in the fire of correction.

REV. E. CRAIG.

September 19th.

'Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.'—
JOB xiv. 1.

CHRISTIANS, believers in the Lord Jesus! your condition is widely different from those who know not the Lord. So must be your carriage. Many of you have already resigned, some of you very recently, your believing friends to the stroke of death. You must feel, and have felt, the pang of separation; but you are not forbidden to mourn. The smitten heart will bleed; the workings of nature must have vent. It is right. Tears were not made that they should never be shed; nor the passion of grief implanted only to be stifled. God's gifts to us in the

persons of those whom He animates with His love, beautifies with His image, and honours with His communion, are too precious to be relinquished without emotion. It would be a strange way of glorifying Him for the best of His earthly blessings, to behave, when they are removed, as if they were not worth one thought. Nor could there be a fouler stain upon the religion of the cross, than a tendency to extinguish affections calculated in a peculiar manner to lessen the evils of a miserable world. No! the grace that bringeth salvation does not destroy, but restore the man. All that belongs to him, excepting sin and its effects, it acknowledges, regulates, and exalts. Jesus Himself, the perfection of moral beauty—Jesus Himself wept at the tomb of His friend. And if we, sharing His sympathy, weep at the tomb of those who are not less *His* friends than our own, instead of falling beneath the level of profane fortitude, we rise up to the grandeur of fellowship with ‘the Man of sorrows.’

REV. DR. MASON.

September 20th.

‘But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’—2 COR. iii. 18.

GOD revealed Himself to Adam as the supreme proprietor of all things, on whom he was entirely and absolutely dependent; and his happiness consisted in keeping this in remembrance. While he did so, the name of the Lord was his strong tower, in which he was perfectly safe. The wisdom, power, and goodness of God were his ample security. The contemplation of the divine character was essential to his retaining the image of God in which he was created. He was like a mirror which reflects the object set before it; and while God was before him, the reflection was exact. Satan, however, succeeded in removing this glorious object, and substituting himself in its room. He changed the truth of God into a lie, and represented the Almighty as jealous

of man, and endeavouring, by means of falsehood, to keep him in ignorance, lest he should become as a god (Gen. iii. 4, 5). The temptation prevailed; God no longer appeared to Adam, holy, just, and true, but false, deceitful, and malicious; and no sooner did he admit the blasphemy into his heart, than, as the just recompense of his folly, he was changed into the image of Satan, who thus became the god of this world. Hence we are all shapen in iniquity, and naturally live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, for we are of our father the devil.

As man was ruined by falsehood, he is restored by truth. When God reveals His Son in the sinner (Gal. i. 16), he beholds the glory of God in the face of Jesus. He sees His purity, goodness, justice, and love; and beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, he is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.



September 21st.

'But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.'—EPH. ii. 13.

YOU had no love to God; but yet He has exercised unspeakable love to you. You have contemned God, and set light by Him; but so great a value has God's grace set on you and your happiness, that you have been redeemed at the price of the blood of His own Son. You chose to be with Satan in his service; but yet God hath made you a joint heir with Christ of His glory! You were ungrateful for past mercies; but yet God not only continued those mercies, but bestowed unspeakably greater mercies upon you. You refused to hear when God called; but yet He has manifested His infinite mercy in the exercise of it towards you. You have rejected Christ, and set Him at nought; and yet He is become your Saviour. You have destroyed yourself; but yet in God has been your help.

What cause for you to praise Him in humility, to walk humbly before God, and to be conformed to His image! 'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.' You should never open your mouth in boasting or self-justification; you should lie the lower before God for His mercy to you. But you have reason, the more abundantly for your past sins, to open your mouth in God's praises, that they may be continually in your mouth, both here and to all eternity, for His rich, unspeakable, and sovereign mercy to you, whereby He, and He alone, has made you to differ from others.

REV. J. EDWARDS.



September 22d.

'Jesus answering, said unto them, Have faith in God.'—

MARK xi. 22.

FAITH in God, in general, is simply trust in Him, reliance on Him, in respect of all that He has revealed to us concerning Himself and His ways; trust in Him for this world, and trust in Him for that which is to come; trust in Him for earth's blessings, and trust in Him for Heaven's blessings; trust in Him as the God of nature, as the God of providence, and as the God of redemption.

It is the same thing essentially in all; just that reliance in God which constrains us to take Him at His word, and to go forward with the unhesitating assurance that whatever He has promised shall be fulfilled, and whatever He has appointed shall stand fast.

If any doubt remains about this being what our Lord means here by having faith in God, it may, I think, be dispelled by looking at any of those instances in the Gospels where people are specially commended for their faith, or those instances in the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where a long catalogue is given

of those who in the *Old Testament* times obtained through faith a good report.

If we ask what it was those persons manifested in the cases referred to, it will be found in every case to be just this, that they simply, and earnestly, and truly confided in God's arrangement or promise, and acted accordingly.

REV. W. L. ALEXANDER, D.D.

September 23d.

'Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.'—JER. xv. 16.

READER! do you believe that the Bible is the word of God? and that God spoke it for this very purpose, that by it He might direct, and support, and comfort man in his journey through time for eternity? And do you not need direction, or support, or comfort? And if you do, will you not go to the Bible to seek it? Where else can you expect it? We are so accustomed to the sight of the Bible, that it ceases to be a miracle to us. It is printed just like other books. But there is nothing in the world like it, or comparable to it. The sun in the firmament is nothing to it, if it be really what it assumes to be, an actual direct communication from God to man. Take up your Bible with this idea, and look at it, and wonder at it. It is a treasure of unspeakable value to you, for it contains a special message of love and tender mercy from God to your soul. Do you wish to converse with God? Open it and read. And, at the same time, look to Him who speaks to you in it, and ask Him to give you an understanding heart, that you may not read in vain; but that the word may be in you as good seed in good ground, bringing forth fruit unto eternal life. Only take care not to separate God from the Bible. Read it in the secret of God's presence, and receive it from His lips, and feed upon it, and it will be to you, as it was to Jeremiah, the joy and rejoicing of your heart.

T. ERSKINE, ESQ.

September 24th.

'Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.'—REV. iii. 4.

THE day of reckoning! that will be the day of solemn decision. No disguises shall avail then. No 'name to live.' The robe shall then be torn down, and the heart be at last seen. Who are then to be safe? There is a little flock who, amid a polluted world and a defiled church, had followed the Shepherd of Israel. Humbly they sought His protection. Implicitly and gratefully they received His mercy. All their hope they rested on His promise. Eagerly they walked in the steps of His righteousness. In self-denial for His sake did they pass through temptation. In the meekness of His own spirit did they endure afflictions. They deemed it their highest honour to resemble His virtues. They anticipated as their greatest blessedness admission to His friendship in His own presence. To these there will be the covert in the day of judgment; amid awful decisions, the gracious acquittal. For 'these are they who washed their robes white in the blood of Christ.' These are they who, 'even amid corrupted Sardis, had walked with undefiled garments.' 'Henceforth,' said the Saviour, 'they shall walk with me in white.'

O come, let us all cast in our lot with the happy 'few,' that we 'may find the mercy which we need in that day.'

REV. DR. MUIR.

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September 25th.

'Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.'—ROM. viii. 26.

GRANT, O my God, that in uniform equanimity of mind I may receive whatever happens; since we know not what we should ask, and since I cannot wish for one

thing more than another without presumption, and without setting up myself as a judge, and making myself responsible for those consequences which Thy wisdom has determined properly to conceal from me. O Lord, I know that I know but one thing ; and that is, that it is good to follow Thee, and evil to offend Thee ! After that, I know not what is better or worse in anything ; I know not what is more profitable for me, sickness or health, wealth or poverty, nor any other of the things of this world. This were a discovery beyond the power of men or angels, and which is veiled in the secrets of Thy providence, which I adore, and which I do not desire to fathom.

BLAISE RASCAL.



September 26th.

'Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.'
—HEB. iv. 14.

JESUS is every part of sin's atonement. As He is the true Priest and the true slain One, so, too, He is the true Altar. He presents Himself to die upon Himself. Believer, thus your sacrifice is perfect, because it is entirely divine. You have a Priest, and only one ; and He is passed into the heavens, and sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high. You have a Lamb, and only one. No more is needed. And He died but once ; once was absolutely sufficient to satisfy and save. So, too, you have an Altar, and only one. It ever stands before the throne of God. Jesus is this Altar. This is no dream of fancy ; it is the faithful saying of our God. The Spirit Himself leads to the Altar, and bids us read in it this gospel lesson. He guided the apostle's lips to utter, 'We have an Altar.' Therefore an Altar is counted among our treasures. But where is it ? It must be where the Priest is, and where the blood is. They are not here. They are within the veil of heaven. There, too, is our Altar, and being in heaven, it can only be the Lord Jesus.

VERY REV. HENRY LAW, DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

September 27th.

'I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplication. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live.'—Ps. cxvi. 1, 2.

WHEN the privations of life have diminished the objects of social happiness; when death has dried up the fountains which run freely from their clear and salutary waters; when pain and disease have altered the character of existence, and changed the scene of hilarity, buoyancy, and activity into the scene of suffering, inactivity, patience, and abstraction from the previous intercourse of life; then to go to the throne of grace, and to draw closer the ties, that no privation, nor suffering, nor vicissitude can dissolve, this is to connect 'a time of need' with the best and brightest manifestations of mercy and grace to the soul! Many may be the hours of comparative repinings, of wounded hopes, and of unhealthy wanderings of mind; but these are sometimes exchanged for hours passed at the throne of grace, to which no eye but that of God is witness; hours when Christ speaks, and pain and sorrow are forgotten; hours when, cut off from the din of life, and separated from friends, and left alone with God, every murmuring is hushed, and every privation is repaid; hours when the manifestation of the Redeemer's glory to the soul has shed a calm and a blissful radiance around every prospect, and proved the earnest of that better heritage, which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

HON. AND REV. G. T. NOEL.

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September 28th.

'I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.'—
ISA. xliii. 11.

IT is a thing of huge difficulty, to bring men to a sense of their natural misery, to see that they have need of a Saviour, and to look out for one; but then, being brought

to that, it is no less, if not more difficult, to persuade them that Christ is He; that as they have need of Him, so they need no more, He being able and sufficient for them. All the waverings and fears of misbelieving minds do spring from dark and narrow apprehensions of Jesus Christ. All the doubt is, not of their interest, as they imagine: they who say so, and think it so, do not perceive the bottom and root of their own malady. They say, they do no whit doubt but that He is able enough, and His righteousness large enough, but that all the doubt is, *if He belong to me*. Now I say this doubt arises from a defect and doubt of the former, wherein you suspect it not. Why doubtest thou that He belongs to thee? Dost thou flee to Him as lost and undone in thyself? Dost thou renounce all that can be called thine, and seek thy life in Him? Then He is thine. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost*. Oh, but I find so much, not only former, but still daily renewed and increasing guiltiness. Why, is He a sufficient Saviour, or is He not? If thou dost say He is not, then it is manifest that here lies the defect and mistake. If thou sayest He is, then hast thou answered all thy objections of that kind: much guiltiness, much or little, old or new, neither helps nor hinders, as to thy interest in Him and salvation by Him. And for dispelling of these mists, nothing can be more effectual than the letting in of those gospel beams, the clear expressions of His riches and fulness in the Scriptures, as eminently made of God, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

September 29th.

'This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.'—Ps. cxviii. 24.

OUR Saviour chose that time to die, when the passover was slain; that time wherein Adam was created, the sixth day of the week at evening. He chose that time for His body to rest in the grave, and His soul to rest in

paradise, wherein His Father rested from all the great work of creation, the seventh day of the week ; and He chose that day to rise again, which His Father chose to begin the creation, the first day of the week ; that the same day might bear the inscription of the creation and the restitution of the world ; and that, as in that day the Lord God brought light out of darkness, so this light, the light that enlighteneth every man that comes into the world, should in it arise from the land of darkness, the grave. ' This is the day that the Lord hath made, let us be glad and rejoice therein.' Our Lord, who had power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again, re-assumes His body, which, though it had tasted death, yet had not seen corruption ; and ariseth, and thereby proclaimed the completing of the redemption ; and, therefore, not possible He should be longer holden of it. It is victory over death and the grave for us. When our Lord raised up Lazarus, he came forth of the grave bound hand and foot with grave-clothes. Though he was for the present rescued from death by the power of Christ, yet he must still be subject to it ; he is revived, but yet riseth with the bands of death about him ; he must die again. But when our Lord riseth, He shakes off His grave-clothes ; the linen that wrapped His body in one place, and the linen that bound His head in another. Our Lord being risen, dieth no more ; death hath no more power over Him.

SIR M. HALE.

September 30th.

' But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'—1 COR. i. 30.

THIS, doubtless, is meant of the righteousness by which we are justified before God. And He is *made this to us*, applied by faith. *His* righteousness becomes *ours*. That exchange made, our sins are laid over upon Him, and His obedience put upon us. This is the glad tidings, that

we are made righteous by Christ. It is not a righteousness wrought by us, but given to us, and put upon us. This, carnal reason cannot comprehend; and being proud, therefore rejects and argues against it; saying, *How can this thing be?* But faith closes with it, and rejoices in it. Without either doing or suffering, the sinner is acquitted and justified, and stands as guiltless of breach, yea, as having fulfilled the whole law. And happy they who thus fasten upon this righteousness! They may lift up their faces with gladness and boldness before God; whereas the most industrious, self-saving justiciary, though in other men's eyes and his own, possibly for the present, he makes a glittering show, yet, when he shall come to be examined of God, and tried according to the law, he shall be covered with shame, and confounded in his folly and guiltiness. But faith triumphs over self-unworthiness, and sin, and death; and the law shrouding the soul under the mantle of Jesus Christ, there it is safe. All accusations fall off, having nowhere to fasten, unless some blemish could be found in that righteousness in which faith hath wrapt itself. This is the very spring of solid peace, and fills the soul with peace and joy.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

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October 1st.

'The Lord will perfect' that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of Thine own hands.'—Ps. cxxxviii. 8.

BE much in prayer. Prayer calls in God's help; Almightiness itself can never be worsted. This was *David's* first and last refuge; prayer brought in God, and God brought in strength, and by this the psalmist got the better of all his fears. It is said of Luther, whatever opposition he found, whatever distemper in his mind, or distraction in his soul, he presently carried it to the throne, and never gave over praying till he prayed his heart into the frame he prayed for. Jacob got the bless-

ing, but how? Why, he wrestled for it till break of day: that is, as the prophet explains it, Hos. xii. 4, 'He wept, and made supplication unto Him.' He was importunate in his request, would take no denial from the blessed Jesus; but put in one plea, then another, till he had power over Him, and came away a prevailer. Prayer sets every dispensation in a sweet light, because it brings strength from God to the soul, whereby it is helped to wait to the end of it. When our eye and heart are up to God, fixed upon Him, *all is well*. Be much in prayer; carry your difficulties, temptations, fears, unbelief, to God, and leave them with Him. Be frequent in thought of heaven; your rest, your home, where all your sorrows will have a full end. Christian! you shall rest from your labours soon; there is a heaven above, and the hope of it comforts and delights you here. It is well, it must be so: 'In Thy presence is fulness of joy, at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.' God proportions your day to your strength; it is but here a little, and there a little, as you are able to bear it. You have a wise and gracious God, who orders and overrules all that concerns you; hitherto He hath done all things well, and He will perfect that which concerns you. REV. J. HILL.

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October 2d.

'And Moses said, I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory.'—
Ex. xxxiii. 18.

YOUR natural life is every moment endangered. Its continuance is a standing miracle, at least it is a standing proof of Jehovah's omnipotence. Your spiritual life is still more exposed. It is a light burning amidst waves; a spark on an ocean. Your safety, then, lies in the Spirit which breathed the prayer before us. Naturally, all your ideas of God are narrow and mean: He has, in some degree, enlarged and raised them. Be thankful; but as you value your souls, rest not in any of your present discoveries or attainments. Press forward. Aim,

like Moses, at high things. Like Paul, count 'all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus your Lord.' Breathe after a nearer and closer communion with God. Deem nothing beyond a sinner's reach, when a sinner pleads in the name of his righteous Lord.

There is no humility in turning away from the blessings which God has commanded you to seek; there is no presumption in thirsting for the means which He has promised to give. A little religion, a cold, comfortless piety, may be a treasure; but it is one which is easily lost,—which it is hardly possible to hold. To think of passing with it to heaven, through such a world as this, is to take a lamp which is only half lighted, and expect it to guide you through the tumult of a storm. 'The joy of the Lord,' that is 'your strength.' It is that which 'shall keep your hearts.'

REV. C. BRADLEY.

October 3d.

'Rejoice in the Lord alway.'—PHIL. iv. 4.

IN Christ all is given: repentance and the remission of sins, justification and sanctification, the adoption of children and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. The blessing of Aaron is fulfilled in our covenant God—Father, Son, and Spirit; we possess divine love, grace, and power, all-sufficient in time and eternity. The fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ means, that we know and realize all that the Father by the Spirit hath given us in Christ, and that we receive each gift in its fulness. That we look not merely at our justification, but also our adoption and our resurrection life; not merely at our present peace, but also our future glory: that we receive the full import of Scripture gifts and promises; full remission of sins, perfect acceptance in the Beloved, the indwelling of the Father and the Son by the Spirit, victory over all sin, the hope of being glorified together with Christ at His second coming. Such is the joy of the

Christian. This joy can only be in a heart decided, and no longer halting and hesitating between God and the world. Christ says : 'These things have I spoken unto you, that *my joy* may be in you, and that your joy may be full.' It is Christ's joy which is to live in us. Does Christ rejoice in the things of the world ? 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' The children of God rejoice in the manifold works of their Father ; the beauty and wisdom of His creation fill them with wonder and delight. We rejoice in all that is good, and honourable, and lovely. But Christians are strangers and pilgrims on earth. They know the 'world,' opposed to God and to Christ, is their enemy. They know that if they wish to rejoice in God and to live with Christ, they must keep themselves unspotted from the world.

ADOLPH SAPHIR.



October 4th.

'My Beloved is mine, and I am His ; He feedeth among the lilies.'

—CANT. ii. 16.

I KNOW He is mine, because I am His ; I have given myself up to Him. I have grace given me to love Him, and therefore I know He loves me. Christ is ours by the Father's gift. God gave His only-begotten Son by His own gift also. He hath given Himself for us. And He is ours by His Spirit, which witnesseth with our spirits ; for the Spirit is given to show us all things that are given us of God, whereof Christ is the chief ; therefore the Spirit of Christ tells us that Christ is ours. Christ being ours, all that He hath is ours. He is ours, for He was born for us,—died for us,—became man for us,—rose for our justification, because we rise with Him. He is our advocate with the Father, and shall be our judge. And Christ being ours, God the Father and the Holy Spirit, all things in the world, and all the promises, are ours ; for in Christ they are all made, and shall be performed. All are yea and amen in Him. But may not a

man be in want and misery for all that? No; in reality Christ is ours, and all things else; for He that can command all things is mine; and if I want other things, if He saw good, He would not withhold them from me. If there were none to be had without a miracle,—no friends, no comfort,—He could make all out of nothing. That you may more fully feed on this comfort, study the excellences of Christ in the Scriptures; the riches and honour He hath; the favour He is in with His Father; the intercession He makes in heaven. Study His goodness, mercy, offices, power; and then come home to yourselves,—all this is *mine*, for He is mine. REV. DR. SIBBS.



October 5th.

'The Master is come, and calleth for thee.'—JOHN xi. 28.

FEAR not, thou that longest to be at home! A few steps more, and thou art there! Soon, O believer! it will be said to thee, as it was to her in the Gospel: 'The Master is come, and calleth for thee.' When you have got to the boundary of your race below, and stand on the verge of heaven and the confines of immortality, then there will be nothing but the short valley of death between you and the promised land; the labours of your pilgrimage will then be on the point of conclusion, and you will have nothing to do but to entreat God, as Moses did: 'I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.' Or with David: 'O send out Thy light and truth, that they may lead me, and bring me to Thy dwelling-place.' Be not dismayed at the prospect of getting home. I have known many a believer go weeping to the river of death; but I never knew a believer go weeping all the way through it. Even an earthly parent is particularly tender and careful of a dying child; much more will the great and gracious Father of the elect, support, cherish, and defend His own children in the hour of death. Believers should not have a slavish dread of death; for where is the infant that is

afraid to go to sleep in its nurse's arms? Dost thou ask, O converted reader, which is best?—to be taken to heaven by sudden death, in a moment or two; or be thrown on a lingering bed, and so, if the Lord please, be able to bear some testimony to His love, power, and faithfulness? I answer, Leave the whole matter to Him. If possible, do not entertain a wish either one way or the other. Be this your petition—

'Only receive my soul to Thee :
The manner and the time be Thine.'

REV. A. TOPLADY.

October 6th.

'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.'—REV. ii. 17.

BLACK and white stones were formerly used for condemnation or acquittal, and we still find black and white balls employed for the purpose of receiving and rejecting a person who proposes to enter a society. Here the white stone denotes the justification of believers, by which they are admitted into the family of God. On the stone is a new name written, signifying that the acceptance of believers is inseparably connected with the sanctification of their nature. This is an allusion to those changes of name of which we read in the word of God, and which were descriptive of, and connected with, special privileges.

The name of Christ, the second Adam, is written on all the children of God (Rev. iii. 12). In virtue of their union with Him, they are Christians, anointed ones, created anew in Christ, stamped with His image, the living epistle of Christ, seen and read of all men; but the Spirit of adoption is only known to themselves; for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him? Hence it is said, that no man knoweth the new name but he who receiveth it. The promise of the white stone and the new name corresponds with

Eph. i. 13, 14 : 'In whom, after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance ;' 'Who hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.' Reader ! is this your experience ? J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

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October 7th.

'In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation : in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.'—EPH. i. 13.

THERE is not one lowly, weeping eye that falls on this page, but may, under the blessed sealing of the Spirit, look up through Jesus to God as a father. Low views of self, deep consciousness of vileness, poverty of state or of spirit, are no objections with God, but rather strong arguments that prevail with Him wherefore you should have the blessings. Only *ask*—only *believe*—only *persevere*, and you shall attain unto it. It is in the heart of the Spirit to seal 'unto the day of redemption' all that believe in Jesus. Reader, whose superscription do you bear ? It may be your reply is, 'I want Christ—I secretly long for Him—I desire Him above all beside.' Is it so ? then take courage and *go to Jesus*. Go to Him simply, go to Him unhesitatingly, go to Him immediately ; that desire is *from* Him, let it lead you *to* Him. That secret longing is the work of the Spirit ; and having begotten it there, think you that He will not honour it, and welcome you when you come ? Try Him. Bring Him to the touchstone of His own truth. The very act of going will be blessed to you. And oh, such is the strength of His love, such is His yearning compassion and melting tenderness of heart for poor sinners, such His ability and willingness to save, that He will no more cast you out than deny His own existence ! Precious Jesus, set us as a seal upon Thine heart, and by Thy SPIRIT seal Thyself upon our hearts ; and give us, unworthy though we are, a place among them which are sealed.

REV. O. WINSLOW.

October 8th.

'Put on the whole armour of God.'—EPH. vi. 10.

STAND therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and remember that expediency will not do instead ; stand, having on the breastplate of righteousness and true holiness, and remember that the form of godliness will not do instead ; stand with 'your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,' and remember it will not do to go on your way merely with the peace of this world, or of circumstances which may be agreeable without advancing your growth in holiness. Take 'above all things the shield of faith,' and remember that reason never stands as a shield in place of faith. Take the 'helmet of salvation,' which is the present realization of your standing in the Lord Jesus, and be not put off with the mere vague hope that you shall be saved. And take the 'sword of the Spirit,' which is the word of God, and remember that tradition and mere church authority will not do instead.

Use them all, and keep them in active exercise. I pray you always to remember the attitude of the Church of Christ, coming up from the wilderness leaning on the arm of her Beloved.

Maintain this attitude but yet a little, and the contest shall be ended : and then, your armour all put off, and clothed with white robes and palms of victory in your hands, the privilege will be yours to be like Christ, to see Him as He is, and to be with Him for ever and ever.

REV. J. W. REEVE, M.A.

October 9th.

'I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.'—
JOB xxxiv. 31.

IF we are in a redeemed state of soul, we shall be willing to pass through the fire just as God may decree, and praying that we may never be a stumbling-block to

others, but, on the contrary, visibly the purified saints of God. And no doubt *experience* will enable us to testify, that none can give trouble when the Lord gives peace, nor any give liberty when He withholds His presence ; so that the mind will be brought to simplicity, patiently waiting the result of His determination respecting us, and meekly declaring, 'I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more.' This is a state of soul most advantageous to the exercised believer, for it helps him to cherish the enjoyments derived simply from the Lord, and to say with holy importunity, 'Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?' Oh may the Eternal Spirit be our great guide and searcher ; and lead us forth into those blessed subjects of wonder and love by which we are surrounded in all God's works and ways, helping us to adore Him in His great creation, to cleave to Him in His wondrous redemption, and to cast the whole burden of our souls and bodies upon His infinite wisdom, love, and power, knowing that in Christ Jesus 'He despiseth not any,' and *forsaketh* not any who put their trust in Him !

MRS. STEVENS.

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October 10th.

'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us ; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.'—I JOHN i. 3.

WHEN the Christian seeks fellowship with God, he can regard Him as a God of mercy and of grace ; for our fellowship is not with the Father alone, but also with the Lord Jesus Christ, His Son. Beside the throne which we approach stands the Only-begotten of the Highest, with His eye towards His Father, and His arm extended over His redeemed ; in His countenance are sympathy, tenderness, and love unutterable ; in His lips these words of grace, 'Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.' The place, the posture, the look, and the words of Jesus, are caught by the eye and the ear of

faith ; and with confidence and joy, the believer draws near to the Holiest of all. I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together ! I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Oh taste and see that God is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

REV. R. COUTTS.

October 11th.

'The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.'—Ps. xxxiv. 10.

REVERENCE that almighty and glorious God in your hearts, who can bring anything out of anything, yea, out of nothing, yea, anything to nothing in a moment. Reverence that power of God, that can pour contempt upon princes ; that can bring Job, the greatest of all the men in the East, to lie in the ashes, and make his bed in a dunghill ; that can send home Naomi empty, who went out full and flourishing. Hath He done so by you ?—debased you when you were high, tumbled you down from the clouds and rolled you in the dust, emptied you when you were full, withered you when you were fresh and flourishing ? Let not God lose the glory of His almighty power ; reverence that glorious hand of God,—rest upon the same Almighty God, who can also bring up the same Job from the dunghill, and set him with princes ; and give Naomi a famous offspring, even one of the ancestors of the Messiah according to the flesh. The same power that caused your sun to go down at mid-day, when you least expected, can also cause it to rise at midnight when you least hope. Dwell not upon creature probabilities or improbabilities ; but lift up thyself, believing soul, and be assured that God can do what He will, and He will do what is good for them that love Him, according to the dictates of unsearchable wisdom and goodness.

REV. S. SHAW.

October 12th.

'For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments : and His commandments are not grievous.'—1 JOHN v. 3.

THE more you know of Jesus Christ and His excellency, the stronger will be your faith. Let it be rooted and grounded in Him—Him personally ; not in doctrine or things merely, but in Him. This is the way to be loving and active in doing good. Strive to believe ! the more you believe the word of God in the face of difficulties, the more you honour and please Him. God will trust him with much, who trusts much to God. Encourage each other in faith. Help each other, by telling of what the Lord hath done for your souls. Bring faith to bear on daily life ; in common duties it will ennoble them, in little things it will make them valuable, in hard things it will make them easy ; doing small things by faith is the way to do great things ; and above all never forget, without Christ you can do nothing, but by faith in Him you can do all things.

REV. J. W. REEVE.

October 13th.

'O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble ! why shouldst Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night ?'—JER. xiv. 8.

IF thy soul is in particular distress, especially inward, wherein the help lies most immediately in God's own hand, learn to trust Him ; and though thou art not clear in thy interest as a believer, yet plead thy interest as a sinner, which thou art sure of. God in our flesh hath enlarged the nation of *Israel*. All that will but *look to Him*, He is their Saviour : now He hath styled Himself the *Saviour* of sinners ; press Him by that. So, in any particular temptation, either to sin, or to distrust because of sin, say, 'Now, Lord, here is an opportunity for Thy power and Thy grace to glorify itself.' And though thou find thyself sinking, yet believe, and thou shalt not drown. 'Now, Lord, look on our sufferings, and make it

appear that *Thou faintest not, neither art weary*, nor that *anything* can stand before Thee, and be Thy hindrance. Break through *our sins*, the greatest hindrance of all; let not these stop the way, nor bind Thy hands; for Thou art in the midst of us, though we see Thee not.' We are most unworthy people, yet called by His name, in covenant with Him; so His glory is interested. Therefore keep close to His interest and His covenant, and beg His staying with us, and arising for us, and lay hold on Him for this end.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

October 14th.

'Walk before me, and be thou perfect.'—GEN. xvii. 1.

THUS said God unto Abraham; and by these words we are instructed, that to live in the presence of God is the way to perfection. Whenever we depart from that way, it is by losing sight of God, and forgetting our dependence upon Him. God is the light which we see, and the end at which we should aim. In all the transactions and different events of life, we should consider only the order of His providence, and should maintain a sense of His presence in the midst of all our affairs.

'I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help,' Ps. cxxi. 1. Depending upon our feet is not sufficient for our deliverance from the innumerable snares that surround us; the danger indeed is below, but the deliverance can only come from above; thither must we raise our eyes to Him from whom our help cometh. We are continually encompassed by our enemies; nor are we, on account of our infirmities, in less danger from within: there is no hope for us but in Jesus Christ, who has overcome the world for Himself and for us; His Omnipotence will support our weakness.

'By faith in Christ I walk with God,
With heaven, my journey's end, in view;
Supported by His staff and rod,
My road is safe and pleasant too.'

ARCHBISHOP FENELON.

October 15th.

'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'—REV. ii. 10.

FRIEND of man, dost Thou speak these words of encouragement to my soul? What but the words of condemnation, and exclusion from Thy presence, might I have anticipated! yet the tidings of Thy mercy, in their very fulness, have reached me. The way to heaven Thou hast opened for me. The grace that prepares the inheritance, and leads to it, is offered to me. And now, with Thy invitation to enter the heavenward path of improvement and peace, Thy promise is issued, that even the fidelity of the weakest and poorest disciple of Thy cross shall be 'crowned' with immortal life. Who would not gratefully and eagerly embrace its invitation to glory? Ever let me hear the voice of my Saviour, and follow implicitly His guidance. What should shake my attachment to His cause? Let the world condemn: if He acquit, no curse remaineth. Let 'tribulation' assail: if the promises of His gospel are left to soothe, is there an earthly consolation that may not be spared? Let 'poverty' come, with the hardship which it brings in its train: if the grace of His Spirit, and the hope of immortality with Him, enrich the soul, truly 'rich,' amid all outward deprivations, the soul shall be. There is 'a crown of righteousness' set before me; an incorruptible crown. All the honours and delights—transient attendants—of an earthly diadem are fallacious. The glory and felicity of the heavenly never fade. O make me faithful, that I may receive it!

REV. DR. MUIR.

October 16th.

'Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.'—JAS. iv. 10.

THE cultivation of that honour which cometh from God, the Christian finds the most effectual means o

bringing his mind into a proper temper in what regards the love of human approbation. Christian, wouldst thou indeed reduce this affection under just control? Rise on the wings of contemplation, until the praises and the censures of men die away upon the ear, and the still small voice of conscience is no longer drowned by the din of this nether world. Here the sight is apt to be occupied with earthly objects, and the hearing to be engrossed with earthly sounds; but there thou shalt come within the view of that resplendent and incorruptible crown, which is held forth to thine acceptance in the realms of light, and thine ear shall be regaled with heavenly melody! Here we dwell in a variable atmosphere,—the prospect is at one time darkened by the gloom of disgrace, and at another the eye is dazzled by the gleamings of glory; but thou hast now ascended above this inconstant region. No storms agitate, no clouds obscure the air; the lightnings play, and the thunders roll beneath thee. W. WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

October 17th.

'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him.'—LAM. iii. 24.

TAKE comfort in the attributes of God. Look upon these as the main of thy inheritance, and shelter and shroud thyself under them from day to day, for this is your stronghold; you are prisoners of hope, and this is the desire of the saints. As Bernard de Amone, speaking with reference to Christ, says he would not only touch Him with Thomas, and put his finger into His side, etc., but 'I would enter wholly even into the very heart of Jesus, into the holy of holies;' so should the soul wholly hide itself in the secret of his pavilion. In the middle of all creature comforts, and inward consolations of spirit, let thy heart rise from them and say, 'Surely this is not my portion;' there is indeed a great deal of sweetness in this, but yet there is much more in that which is

my portion. A gracious heart should rise in this manner, and please itself with thinking, if there be sweetness on earth, much more in heaven. If at any time the Lord takes away the creatures from thee, retire unto Him, and say, 'Lord, my portion was not in them;' for the time will come, when God will put an end to all creature comforts, and He will supply all immediately from Himself; and therefore, so He give the more of Himself, it is no matter what thou dost lose of all things else. From thine heart say, 'The Lord is my portion; therefore will I hope in HIM.'

REV. W. STRONG.



October 18th.

'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'—EPH. v. 16.

THE wheels of nature are not made to roll backward; everything presses on toward eternity: from the birth of time, an impetuous current has set in, which bears all the sons of men back towards that interminable ocean. Meanwhile heaven is attracting to itself whatever is congenial to its nature; is enriching itself by the spoils of earth, and collecting within its capacious bosom whatever is pure, permanent, and divine, leaving nothing for the last fire to consume but the objects and the slaves of concupiscence; while everything which grace has prepared and beautified shall be gathered from the ruins of the world, to adorn the eternal city, 'which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.' Let us obey the voice that calls us thither; let us seek the things that are above, and no longer cleave to a world which must shortly perish, and which we must shortly quit, while we neglect to prepare for that in which we are invited to dwell for ever.

REV. R. HALL.

October 19th.

'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.'—MATT. xviii. 19.

It has been the pleasing compact of some closely joined in heart but widely distant in place, to look at the same hour on the same luminary, to watch the beam of the same rising moon or evening star, and thus to imagine a kind of sensible union, by being alike and at once present to the same beautiful object. How does it heighten and substantiate this device of friendship (which else is comparatively a fruitless and empty refinement), to commune not merely with a bright emblem of the divine bounty, but with the omnipresent Benefactor Himself. My dearest friend may be in another hemisphere, or, though but a few leagues divide us, a cloud may conceal that star from one which rises in brightness to the other; but if we devoutly intercede for each other's welfare, before Him by whose presence all times are comprised, our supplications, whether offered at one or at different hours, form a real and intimate communion with each other and with Him. The showers of Britain and Sumatra fall or flow into the same mighty deep; the tears of Christian sympathy poured out to God, though shed in the remotest climates, may be said to drop into the same ocean of His loving-kindness, and to be mingled there.

J. SHEPPARD, ESQ.

October 20th.

'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.'—1 COR. v. 6.

THREE characters of grace form three excellent tests of the genuineness of our religion. It is internal: have we felt its power within us, on our hearts? It is assimilating: is it renewing us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, into the image of God? It is diffusive: is there a work

begun in us, and on us, which shall at length 'sanctify us wholly'? If not so, we need to begin at the beginning, by the Holy Spirit of God to be 'born again.' But if so, though defective, and confessing with Paul in Rom. vii. 19, happy are we! the Lord will perfect that which concerneth us; the 'whole shall be leavened.' Be it ours, by earnest prayer and diligence, to hasten on so blessed a consummation; and also to bring the grace within us to act as well without as within: no candle is lighted for itself; none light it to lock the door and leave it burning in an empty room. We are not lighted for self, nay, nor leavened for self. No man liveth for himself. Let us be as leaven in our families; among our friends and fellows; in the neighbourhood around us. Nor let us rest till there is not one within the sphere of our influence whom we have not, through God's blessing, leavened, or attempted to leaven, by our grace. Freely we have received, freely give.

THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.

October 21st.

'And, lo, the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.'—MATT. ii. 9.

THE star of Bethlehem no longer arises upon the path of the earthly pilgrim, to guide him to the presence of his God. But does not every orb of heaven appear to go forth charged with the same holy commission? Has not each 'a voice'? and do not all 'proclaim the glory of the Lord,' and summon us to the presence of Him who built the heavens, who threw the arch of fire over this benighted world, who said, 'Let there be light, and there was light'? And if all these lights of heaven were extinguished, is not every object in the universe, and every incident in life, calculated to teach the same lesson, and draw us closer to the same compassionate Redeemer? Thou Saviour of the miserable! every vicissitude of life, every turn in the restless wheel of events, prompts us to take refuge in Thy bosom. But with what offerings shall we approach Thee? It is not in our power to bring the gold and frankincense

of an uncorrupted heart, or of a spotless life. We are, by nature and by practice, 'wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' Oh welcome us, Thou gracious Redeemer, as we are! wash us with Thy blood, and sanctify us with Thy Spirit! Admit us to lie at Thy feet, to hear Thy voice, to see Thy face, and to rejoice in Thy love for ever. Welcome us as we are, and make us all we ought to be.

REV. J. W. CUNNINGHAM.



October 22d.

'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'—1 PET. ii. 5.

SOME are all their days laying the foundation, and are never able to build upon it to any comfort to themselves, or usefulness to others; and the reason is, because they will be mixing with the foundation, stones that are only fit for the following building. They will be bringing their obedience, duties, mortification of sin, and the like, unto the foundation. These are precious stones to build with, but unmeet to be first laid, to bear upon them the whole weight of the building. The foundation is to be laid in mere grace, mercy, pardon in the blood of Christ. This the soul is to accept of, and to rest in merely as it is grace, without the consideration of anything in itself, but that it is sinful and obnoxious to ruin. This it finds a difficulty in, and would gladly have something of its own to mix with it. It cannot tell how to fix these foundation stones, without some cement of its own endeavours and duties; and because these things will not mix, they spend a fruitless labour about it all their days. But if the foundation be of grace, it is not all of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. If anything of our own be mixed with grace in this matter, it utterly destroys the nature of grace, which, if it be not alone, is not at all.

REV. DR. OWEN.

October 23d.

'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. —ROM. viii. 28.

AMIDST the storms and tempests of the world, there is a perfect calm in the breasts of those who not only do the will of God, but love to do it. They are at peace with God, by the blood of reconciliation; at peace with themselves, by the answer of a good conscience, and the subjection of those desires which war against the soul; at peace with all men by the spirit of charity; and the whole creation is so at peace with them, that 'all things work for their good.' No external troubles can rob them of this great peace; no offences or stumbling-blocks, which are thrown in their way by persecution or temptation, by the malice of enemies, by anything they see, hear of, or feel, can detain or divert them from their course. Heavenly love surmounts every obstacle, and runs with delight 'the way of God's commandments.'

BISHOP HORNE.

October 24th.

'Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.'—I THESS. i. 4.

FAITH is the root, and assurance is the flower. Doubtless you can never have the flower without the root; but it is no less certain, you may have the root and not the flower. Faith is that poor trembling woman who came behind Jesus in the press, and touched the hem of His garment, Mark v. 27. Assurance is Stephen standing calmly in the midst of his murderers, and saying, 'I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God,' Acts vii. 56. Faith is the penitent thief, crying, 'Lord, remember me,' Luke xxiii. 42. Assurance is Job sitting in the dust, covered with sores, and saying, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' Job xix. 25;

Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,' Job xiii. 15. Faith is Peter's cry, as he began to sink, 'Lord, save me!' Matt. xiv. 30. Assurance is that same Peter declaring before the council in after times, 'This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,' Acts iv. 11, 12. Faith is the anxious, trembling voice, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief,' Mark ix. 24. Assurance is the confident challenge, 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth?' Rom. viii. 33, 34. Faith is Saul praying in the house of Judas at Damascus, sorrowful, blind, and alone, Acts ix. 11. Assurance is Paul, the aged prisoner, looking calmly into the grave, and saying, 'I know whom I have believed. There is a crown laid up for me,' 2 Tim. i. 12, iv. 8.

RYLE.

October 25th.

'He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.'—ISA. xl. 11.

WHAT intimate, close, and affectionate relation canst thou imagine, which God is not willing to form with thee in religion? Art thou affected with the vigilance of a shepherd, who watcheth over and sacrificeth all his care, and even his life, for his flock? This relation God will have with thee: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' Art thou affected with the confidence of a friend, who openeth his heart to his friend, and communicates to him his most secret thoughts, dividing with him all his pleasures and all his pains? God will have this relation with thee: 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.' 'Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?' 'I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends,

for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.' Art thou touched with the tenderness of a mother, whose highest earthly happiness is to supply the wants of her beloved child? God will have this relation with thee: 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee,' Isa. xlix. 15.

REV. J. SAURIN.

October 26th.

'How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.'—Ps. xxxvi. 7.

WHO would not put their trust under the shadow of His wings, and think themselves safe? If we consider what everlasting arms He hath, that by a word support the frame of the world; what He can do if He stretch out His arm; and then, if these two immutable things, His promise and His oath, were looked upon, how He hath engaged Himself in His truth, and sworn in His holiness: would not a soul lie safely between these three? What strong consolation would such a threefold consideration yield! Would any wind or tempest blow within these walls mounted up to heaven? Stayedness on God is nothing else but the fixedness of believing and trusting. It is even the mature and ripe age of faith. Faith, while it is yet in infancy, in its tender years, neither can endure storms, nor can it uphold us in them; but when it hath sprung up and grown in the root of Jesse, when it is rooted and established in Jesus Christ, then it establisheth the soul. Faith abiding in Him, and taking root, groweth confirmed, as a tree that cannot be easily moved; and if you establish faith, you shall be established.

REV. H. BINNING.

October 27th.

'Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints.'—COL. i. 4.

FAITH and love comprehend the greater part of practical Christianity. Faith is the commencement, love is the completion; faith informs the understanding, love purifies the heart: the one is the light, the other the warmth of the soul; what the one believes as true, the other embraces as good.

Faith is a holy trust in all that God has made known to us in His word. As the natural eye is adapted to receive the light of heaven, so faith is adapted to welcome all the truth of the Scriptures. And as in the first creation light preceded other external blessings, so in the new creation does the light of faith precede other graces. Faith is the foundation and root of piety, and the gate of life by which God enters the soul.

DANIEL, BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

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October 28th.

'Thou art my portion, O Lord!'—Ps. cxix. 57.

WHAT, my soul, is the portion which thou hast chosen? What is the bosom on which thou art reclining? Is it the world? As well pillow thy head on the restless wave! Is it creature comforts? They are baseless fabrics—empty shadows, which mock the hand that would fondly grasp them! Is it riches? They 'take to themselves wings and flee away!' Is it the pleasures of sin? These are but 'for a season.' Is it life? It is 'a vapour;'—verily there may be but 'a step between thee and death!' Is it friends? They are dying, changing, perishing. BUT—*Is it the Eternal God?* Undying, unfading, unchanging, everlasting! 'Heart and flesh may faint and fail,' earthly streams of comfort may cease, friends may deceive, health may decay, gold may perish, earthly fabrics

of happiness may crumble and totter in the very act of being reared ; *but*, amid the wreck and ruin of thy dearest earthly joys, there is *One* that 'changeth not !' One portion that can never deceive thee, one fountain that can never fail thee, one Friend that can never forsake thee,— 'The same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever !' With HIM for thy portion, thou wilt need no other portion. Thine in life, thine in death, thine in joy, thine in sorrow, thine in health, thine in sickness, thine in time, thine through eternity ! 'Happy,' thrice happy, surely, 'is every people who are in such a case. Yea, happy is that people whose God is—THE LORD !'

REV. J. R. MACDUFF.

October 29th.

'We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not : but He that is begotten of God keepeth Himself, and that wicked one toucheth Him not.'—1 JOHN v. 18.

EACH believer, shine he ever so brightly, is at present sanctified but in part ; need we wonder if, on some occasions, the splendour of his gifts, and the radiancy of his graces, suffer a temporary eclipse ! At such times, let our candour and forbearance have their perfect work. After a certain period, he will emerge from the shade, and beam forth in all the loveliness of his usual lustre ; and when the declining saint has sat his appointed time in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto him. Happy is that benighted soul whose faith (for it is the peculiar business of faith's eye to see in the dark) can pierce the gloom, anticipate the return of day, and long for a final approximation to the Sun of Righteousness !

Bright evidences and warm experiences of our interest in Christ, and of the work of His Spirit upon the soul, are generally the blessed consequences of living near to God, and of walking closely with Him in all holy conversation, prayer, and watchful godliness. The joy and liveliness of grace (though not grace itself) may be sinned away.

Spiritual comfort is a tender plant, and requires much delicacy of treatment. To be triumphant and alert in the ways of God, you must take equal heed of wandering and of slumbering.

REV. A. TOPLADY.

October 30th.

'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.'—JOHN xv. 4.

WE are standing on the brink of eternity; in a few days we shall be launched into it. Let us look over the precipice before we make the awful plunge. It is a dark and untried region. Do you see any light, or will you commit yourself to chance? Oh, in the midst of that obscurity, there shines a bright star, which, even whilst we gaze on it, sends its own blessed light into the heart, and expels thence all doubts and anxieties! The King of that country is He who died here for sinners. He loved us, and gave Himself for us. And He hath gone to prepare a place for His people. If you belong to Him, you are safe; and you may belong to Him to-day. When He becomes your hope, you will have a joyful hope,—a hope that maketh not ashamed. But till then, there is no hope for you. With Him is the fountain of life, that is, of happiness; and we deceive ourselves when we look for true happiness elsewhere. When our hearts wander from Him, they wander from life and joy. 'Abide in me,' He says, 'and I will abide in you.' What are all the promises which the world can make in comparison of this?

T. ERSKINE, ESQ.

October 31st.

'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.'—
JER. viii. 20.

THE change of the seasons reminds us of the lapse of time, and that we are constantly advancing to the end of

our pilgrimage. The spring, in which the blossoms appear, giving promise of the future crop, corresponds with our youth. Summer, during which the labourer bears the burden and heat of the day, resembles manhood, in which we are engaged in the active business of life. Autumn is the picture of our declining years; and winter symbolizes the evil days (Eccles. xii.), in which by so many unequivocal tokens the approach of death is announced. But how many slight the warnings which we receive, both by the change of the seasons and by our passing through the various periods of human life! To say nothing of the days of youth, when men are especially called to remember their Creator, the summer is ended amidst the anxious pursuit of what has yielded no solid satisfaction; nay, the harvest is past, they have entered on the last stage of their journey, and they are not saved. Alas! the graves are ready for them, and all beyond is blackness and gloom. May the Lord even then pluck them as brands from the burning. May Jesus give them repentance unto life; for He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him. May they hear His voice saying, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.'

J. A. HALDANE, ESQ.

November 1st.

'The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.'—
2 TIM. iv. 13.

ON the approach of winter, in a cold prison, and at the termination of his course, the Apostle Paul appears here to be a follower indeed of Him who had not where to lay His head. He is presented to our view as actually enduring those hardships which elsewhere he describes in a manner so affecting: 'Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked,—in prisons, in cold, in nakedness.' He had given up, as he elsewhere

informs us, all the fair prospects that once offered to him of worldly advantages, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and had suffered the loss of all things. He is about to suffer death for the testimony of Jesus ; and now he requests one of the few friends that still adhered to him, to do his diligence to come before winter, and to bring to him the cloak, which was necessary to cover him. Here, in his solemn farewell address, of which the verse before us forms a part, a view is exhibited of the apostle of the Gentiles, calculated deeply to affect us. We behold him standing upon the confines of the two worlds, about to be beheaded, as guilty, by the Emperor of Rome, in the other world to be crowned as righteous by the King of kings ; here deserted by men, there to be welcomed by angels ; here in want of a cloak to cover him, there to be clothed upon with his house from heaven.

R. HALDANE, ESQ.

November 2d.

‘But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.’—JOHN xiv. 26.

Is there a moment in the pilgrimage of the Christian in which he so much stands in need of this remembrance, as when he is going down into the ‘valley of the shadow of death’? When his eye becomes dim, and he can no longer trace in the book of God the characters of promise ; when his ear becomes dull, even to the gentle whispers of devoted love, then is the time for the special manifestation of the Spirit’s power of love, in making the lamp of spiritual life to burn brightly amid the ruins of a decaying tenement of clay, and in filling the soul with hopes which lend it wings for heaven, even as the body crumbles into the dust of the earth. Believer, as you witness the impress of holy calm and heavenly joy which lingers on the cold and deserted mansion, as it lies before you, see what the Spirit in His love can do for a follower

of the Lamb, even when in the embrace of death. And fear thou not, with such a gentle, heavenly guide, to go down to the portals of the tomb; for the deeper the darkness there, the brighter will be His rays of light upon the soul; and the more that every earthly stream of love is dried up, the more will His unutterable love fall with the softness of the dew of heaven upon the weary soul.

REV. D. T. K. DRUMMOND.

November 3d.

'For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.'—
COL. iii. 3.

So truly is Christ the representative of those for whom He was born, and for whom He died, that not only do His unmerited sufferings outweigh our debt of punishment, but His meritorious obedience is also reckoned to the account of His constituents. He lived as well as died for us; His prayers are ours; ours are His blameless innocence and purity; it was our nature which fasted with Him in the desert; it was our nature which was transfigured in the mount with Him. In Him we are the sons of God once more, and the heaven whither He is gone to prepare a place for us, is henceforth not only His, but our inheritance. In all the solemn ceremonies of our religion, we acknowledge Christ as our advocate, our representative, our preserver. Our baptism, our eucharistic feast, our daily services alike are taught to repose on Him, and are offered through Him to the Almighty as means and symbols, whereby we plead the merits of His blood as a cause why judgment should not be passed against us; and reply, in the words of St. Paul, and in answer to that doom of mortality which attaches to our guilty nature, that we are no longer criminals, since our punishment is past; that we are no longer debtors, since our debt is paid; that we are no longer mortal, since we are already virtually deceased in the person of our substitute; that we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God.

BISHOP HEBER.

November 4th.

'Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.'—HEB. xii. 2.

IN every enjoyment, oh thou watchful Christian, look unto Jesus; receive it as proceeding from His love, and purchased by His agonies. In every tribulation, look unto Jesus; mark His gracious hand managing the scourge, or mingling the bitter cup; attempering it to a proper degree of severity; adjusting the time of its continuance, and ready to make these seeming disasters productive of real good. In every prayer look unto Jesus, thy prevailing advocate; recommending thy devotions, and 'bearing the iniquity of thy holy things.' In every temptation, look unto Jesus, the author of thy strength, and Captain of thy salvation; who alone is able to make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies. But especially when the *hour* of thy *departure* approaches, when 'thy flesh and thy heart fail;' when all the springs of life are irreparably breaking; *then* look unto Jesus with a believing eye. Like expiring Stephen, behold Him standing at the right hand of God, on purpose to succour His people in this their last extremity. 'See, by faith, the Lord's Christ.' View Him as the only way to the everlasting mansions, as the only *door* to the abodes of bliss.

REV. J. HERVEY.

November 5th.

'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.'—HEB. xi. 13.

READER, what sympathy then have you with these and similar aspirations of the apostle? Have you any share in the confession of the text? Do you feel yourself to be

a 'stranger and a pilgrim upon earth'? This is a day of much external religious profession. I fear there is a mournful disproportion between the means of heavenly knowledge and the spiritual results of that knowledge in the present day. What then, let me ask, is our own spiritual condition? Is the world too much our home? Are our thoughts earthly? Are our plans and wishes earthly? Do present objects furnish us with our largest measures of real enjoyment? Or do we pass much time alone with God? Do we feed upon the hidden manna? and are we growing into the maturity of God's children? Is meditation upon the promises of God sweet to our hearts? Are we looking for our Lord's return? Is He, in the language of Scripture, 'precious to us'? and 'though now we see Him not, do we love Him, and rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory'? Can we in any way sympathize with the apostle when he says, 'I desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better'? Reader, what answer does your soul return to questions of this kind? Oh! is there the stranger's feeling and the pilgrim's step amongst us? Are we hastening forward to be where the Lord has entered 'as the forerunner'?

'For chiefly we should lift our gaze
Above the world's uncertain haze,
And look with calm unwavering eye
On the bright fields beyond the sky.'

HON. AND REV. G. T. NOEL.

November 6th.

'When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.'—
JOHN xix. 30.

'*It is finished.*'—Holy victim! Thy sufferings are finished! *All* is finished that wicked men have wonderfully destined to contribute towards the general deliverance! What remains, infinite power and infinite mercy

shall accomplish. The disciples, those few of them who had the courage to be present at this dismal scene, hung their heads in sorrowful despondency, and seem to have abandoned the hope that *this* was He who should redeem Israel. But Israel *is* redeemed. The high sacrifice appointed before the foundation of the world, typified in all the sacrifices of the law, is now slain, and is accepted. That Jesus who, according to His own prediction, hath expired on the cross, shall, according to His own prediction, be raised again on the third day. He is raised, He is entered into glory,—He is sitting down for ever at the right hand of the Majesty on high. There He pleads the merit of His blood in behalf of those crying sins that caused it to be shed. Nor does He plead in vain. The final judgment is committed to Him; and the greatest sinners who come to Him have no cause to fear the severity of the Judge, who hath Himself been touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

BISHOP HORSLEY.



November 7th.

'In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.'—JOHN xiv. 2.

THE comfort imparted in the text, as you will see, is connected especially with the other world. It is drawn out of that future world. The sorrow is here, the fountainhead of the consolation is up yonder, and we are bid look up to the place whence it flows. In my Father's house are many mansions. Thus we see that the whole manner and quality of the Christian consolation is different from that which the world giveth.

When the heart is yet bleeding from the stroke some recent separation, the world whispers, Bear up, bear up, think not of it, time will heal, other friends will gather around, the duties and the pleasures of life will occupy and interest the mind once more, and ere long the winter of grief and sorrow will be gone.

Christ says, Think of it, think of it, deeply and well.

Know ye what I have done to you? Look at the event in all its known relations and issues. Follow the departed in your thought resolutely, as Elisha followed Elijah, saying, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. Follow until the gloom, and the silence, and the seeming emptiness of death, all give place to the apparency and reality and brightness of that better world, which is enriching itself so often and so much by the losses and the sorrows of this. In my Father's house are many mansions.

REV. DR. ALEX. RALEIGH.

November 8th.

'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'—1 PET. ii. 5.

Is it not most foolish to bestow continual pains and diligence on the purchase of great possessions and honours, if we believe this, that the best of them is no better than a short-lived flower, and to neglect the purchase of those glorious mansions of eternity,—a garland of never-fading flowers, such as wither not; an unfading crown of everlasting life, and those everlasting pleasures that are at the right hand of God? That life which shall never end must begin here. It is the new spiritual life of which the word of God is the immortal seed. Happy, indeed, the stones that God chooses to be living stones in the spiritual temple, though they be hammered and hewed, and be polished for it by affliction, the inward work of mortification and repentance. It is worth the enduring of all, to be fitted for this building. The Christian renews the gift of himself every day to God; and receiving it every day bettered again, till he hath the more delight in giving it, as being fitter for God, the more is it sanctified by former sacrificing. If the faith thou hast grow out of thy natural heart of itself, be assured it is but a weed. The right plant of faith is always

set by God's own hand, and it is watered and preserved by Him ; because exposed to many hazards, He waters it day and night.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.



November 9th.

' Therefore let us not sleep, as do others ; but let us watch and be sober.'—1 THESS. v. 6.

I WOULD say, even to the believer in Christ, ' Awake ! ' How many live *below* their privileges, far *short* of their bounden duty, in *too worldly* a spirit, and *too earthly* in their views, pursuits, and pleasures ! How many, like the wise virgins, may be found *asleep* at their posts ! Awake from these *disgraceful* slumbers. Consider how much corruption is yet dwelling in the heart, and must be subdued by faith, and watchfulness, and prayer ; how small a portion of the heavenly spirit is *yet* possessed, that forms our *meetness* for glory. Live *nearer* heaven, walk *more humbly* with God, *more alive* to the interests of the soul, *more prepared* for that glorious and eternal *rest* that remaineth to the people of God. Arise, and ' trim your lamp,' ' gird up the loins of your mind ; ' add to your faith virtue, and every Christian grace ; cast off every weight, and every sin, and run with patience the race that is set before you ; walk as children of light and of the day, that when the Bridegroom shall come, He may find you watching, and prepared to enter with Him into the heaven of glory, which God hath promised to them that love *Him*, ' where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary pilgrims are at rest.'

REV. C. DAVY.



November 10th.

' So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty : for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him.'—Ps. xlv. 11.

GOD is the husband, His people the spouse. I am thy God, saith the Lord, that hath done for thee, done great

things for thee ; I am He that brought thee out of Egypt, and brought thee out of bondage ; thou hast been a slave, but serve me, and I will make thee a king ; thou hast been a yassal to an earthly prince, but I will *reprove kings for thy sake*, 1 Chron. vi. 21. *And thou shalt rule nations with a rod of iron*, Rev. ii. 26, 27. All this have I done for thee ; now hear what you must do for me. Thou shalt keep close to me, *have none other gods besides me*. He gives His commands, and helps to perform what He commands. Lord, give me what thou requirest from me, and then command what thou wilt. Art thou a believer, and sayest thou art free from the law ? Art thou not under law in a sense ? For, after a soul is brought home to Christ, though love be the immediate rod that commands and constrains unto the obedience of Christ ; yet law is the mediate Lord, and love works by law, as the loveliest Lord. Will not this consideration sweeten the sourest precept ? Christ's love shed abroad in a soul, works upwards and facilitates the law ; and though corrupt will, before Christ came, was a wicked tyrant, which brought the man under the law-curse ; yet Christ being come, brings the soul and whole man under the law's command. Hence the law, which was forcing by power, becomes fettering by love, Christ's own silken cord.

REV. S. MORE.



November 11th.

‘ These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer ; I have overcome the world. ’—JOHN xvi. 33.

THE Saviour tells us to be of good cheer, for He hath overcome the world. He is our Shepherd, and never shall we want. He never slumbers nor sleeps.

Forget not that the Spirit of God is promised to all who ask Him, and that, through Him, the Saviour strengthens us for all things. In the day of trial and of conflict, when you feel your afflictions and evils,

recollect that you have a High Priest of the most kind and compassionate character. You are not left alone, so that a sense of weakness need not discourage you. He who hath called His people by His grace, will bear with them, meekly and patiently, all the way. Even Moses failed in this ; but our High Priest and Leader will no more cast us off than 'a nursing father' would cast away a child for its crying or frowardness. To raise still higher our view of His fond affection, it is compared to the warmest attachment 'of a mother.' He was Himself tried, and knows from experience what aid and care we need. Much, indeed, there is in us that is fitted to provoke Him to cast us off. Our frequent transgressions, the coldness and instability of our hearts, the heavy aggravation of our sins, all tend to illustrate that long-suffering which bears with us notwithstanding. There is not a day but we sin against Him, yet He freely forgives and richly blesses us. What a mercy to have such an advocate with the Father !

REV. DR. RUSSELL.



November 12th.

'And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ : if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.'—ROM. viii. 17.

THE Divine Spirit declares that saints are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Each therefore has a right to say, Jesus Himself is *my* portion, *my* reward, *my* inheritance. Yes, such is the mutual property which God and His people have in each other, that the inheritance is reciprocal between them. 'For the portion of Jacob is the Former of all things, and Israel is the rod of his inheritance ; the Lord of hosts is His name.' All the awful, the amiable, the adorable attributes of Deity will appear glorious in the children of God, and be enjoyed by them to their everlasting honour and unutterable bliss, to the consummation of their sublime happiness in an eternal world. . What can the heart of man desire

more? Or what good thing will God withhold from them for whom He gave His Son—to whom He gave Himself?

REV. A. BOOTH.



November 13th.

‘For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty.’—2 PET. i. 16.

KNOWN holiness is apt to degenerate into self-righteousness. What God gives us on the account of sanctification, we are ready enough to reckon on the score of justification. It is a hard thing to feel grace, and believe as if there were none. We have so much of the Pharisee in us by nature, that it is sometimes well that our good is hid from us. We are ready to take our corn and wine, and bestow them on other lovers. Were there not in our hearts a spiritually sensible principle of corruption, and in our duties a discernible mixture of self, it would be impossible we should walk so humbly as is required of them who hold communion with God, in a covenant of grace and pardoning mercy. It is a good life which is attended with a faith of righteousness and a sense of corruption. While I know Christ’s righteousness, I shall have the less care to know my own holiness. To be holy is necessary : to know it, sometimes a temptation.

REV. DR. OWEN.



November 14th.

‘Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.’—
Ps. cxvi. 15.

IT is a comfortable and an animating thought, that ‘precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.’ He has often permitted His people to be persecuted unto the death ; and there is a host of blessed

martyrs round His throne. But He gave them up to the will of their enemies, that they might bear a more impressive witness to the truth than the longest and most prosperous life could have effected ; He stood by them when they were suffering for His sake, and spread a glory over their last scene, brighter and more permanent by far than what has ever accompanied the departure of the proudest and most splendid of this world's heroes. And from the scaffold or the flames, where they perished, He has wafted their spirits to the peculiar blessedness of those who 'have come through much tribulation.' And as in these cases He has loved and honoured His saints even in the midst of apparent desertion, so in all circumstances He watches over them for good. He does not needlessly allow them to be the victims of human enmity. He does not set so little value on their continuance in the world, as to eye their treatment in it, or their exit from it, with indifference. While they are here, He 'keeps them as the apple of His eye ;' and when they go hence, His Spirit goes with them, to place them in their sainted rest, and to give them entrance into 'the joy of their Lord.'

REV. DR. THOMSON.

November 15th.

'Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.'—1 COR. xv. 1.

ALL things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven are spiritual. Its blessings are spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ, including peace with God by the blood of Jesus, the pardon of sin, the indwelling and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, the adoption of children, victory over all our enemies, and eternal glory beyond the grave. Its riches are also spiritual ; among these may be included,—all the fulness of God—the unsearchable riches of Christ. For 'all things,' saith an apostle, 'are yours ; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' This

kingdom hath a throne, a sceptre, and an inheritance ; but its throne is in the heavens ; its sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness and of love ; its inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and that which fadeth not away, to be conferred on all its true subjects. The beauty, glory, and grandeur of this kingdom are not fading and carnal, they are spiritual and imperishable. Its beauty is a holy beauty ; its glory and grandeur consist in possessing a holy likeness to God, the impress of His image on the heart : 'We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.'

REV. W. INNES.

November 16th.

'Let me see thy countenance ; let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.'—SONG OF SOL. ii. 14.

As the timorous dove pursued by the vulture, and well-nigh made a prey, with fluttering anxious wings hides itself deeper than ever in the clefts of the rock and in the secret place of the precipice, so the backslidden believer whom Satan has desired to have, that he might sift him as wheat, when he is restored once more to the all-gracious presence of his Lord, clings to Him with fluttering anxious faith, and hides himself deeper than ever in the wounds of his Saviour. Thus it was that the fallen Peter, when he had so grievously denied his Lord, yet when brought again within sight of the Saviour standing upon the shore, was the only one of the disciples who girt his fisher's coat unto him, and cast himself into the sea to swim to Jesus ; and just as that backslidden apostle, when again he had hidden himself in the clefts of the Rock of Ages, found that the love of Jesus was more tender to him than ever, when He began that conversation which, more than all others in the Bible, combines the kindest of reproofs with the kindest of encouragements, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?'

just so does every backslidden believer find, that when he is again hidden in the freshly-opened wounds of his Lord, the fountain of His love begins to flow afresh, and the stream of kindness and affection is fuller and more overflowing than ever.

REV. R. M. M'CHEYNE.

November 17th.

'Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.'—Ps. cxix. 11.

By prayer we obtain the blessing of God on the passage read. We obtain the Holy Spirit, by whom it was dictated, to apply it to our hearts with enlightening and saving power. Without His aid we cannot understand the Bible. Without His aid we cannot experience its divine influence. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him.' The word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and until He apply it to our souls, we cannot experience it to be quick and powerful.

He therefore who reads the Bible without prayer, is reading it in a way in which the Bible itself tells him he can derive no advantage from it. The Bible must be read with earnest persevering prayer. The effect of prayer in reading the Bible is twofold. It makes us more attentive to what we read. We cannot well read carelessly a passage, the reading of which we have prayed that God would bless to our edification, or which we are about to make the foundation of our petition to Him. The recollection of this will chain down our attention, and make us anxious to understand what we read and to see its application to ourselves.

REV. MARCUS DODS.

November 18th.

'But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.'—TIT. iii. 4, 5.

IF I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, oh how happy should I be! If I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil! But I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner who believes in Christ has a righteousness infinitely more excellent than that of either saints or angels. If the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in Christ, my divine Surety. If the law requires obedience that may stand before the burning eye of God, behold, it is in Jesus my Mediator. Should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me, I remit them both to my dying and obedient Immanuel. With Him the Father is always well pleased, and in Him the believer stands complete.

REV. J. HERVEY.

November 19th.

'He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap; He layeth up the depth in storehouses.'—PS. xxxiii. 7.

THE floods of great waters may surround the Christian, and, to the eye of unthinking men, and in the apprehension of his own timid mind, they may be about to overwhelm him. But his God says to them, 'Hitherto shall ye come, but no farther;' and he reposes on that love which 'many waters cannot quench, and which the floods cannot drown.' God is the hiding-place which he may flee to when perils menace him; into which his most powerful enemies cannot follow him; and where he is as secure from harm as Omnipotence can make him. God 'preserves him from trouble;' saves him from every disappointment, and from every pain that would injure his essential interests; blunts the edge of such afflictions as

are allowed to befall him, by imparting help and consolation along with them ; and converts them into blessings, by making them subservient to his present improvement and everlasting happiness : and even when he seems ready to fall a prey to the adversities which come upon him, when all things wear the aspect of hostility, and conspire to accomplish his ruin, and when escape appears to be hopeless and impossible, even then God magnifies His grace and His might, by compassing him about with songs of deliverance ; not only delivering him, but making the deliverance so manifest to him, as to impress him with the sense of His divine interposition, and to fill his heart with gratitude, and his mouth with praise.

REV. DR. THOMSON.

November 20th.

'And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.'—LUKE xviii. 13.

THE more sinful you see yourself to be, the more need you will see yourself to have of Christ ; and the more need you see yourself to have of Christ, the more will you prize Christ ; and the more you prize Christ, the more you will desire Him ; and the more you desire Christ, the more fit and worthy receiver you will be. Wherefore, when you receive the sacrament, then take occasion to examine yourself, as the apostle doth exhort you, and commune with your own heart, saying in your heart after this manner,—Though I do believe that all these my sins are for Christ's sake freely and fully pardoned and forgiven, so as that I shall never be condemned for them ; yet do I not so fully and comfortably believe it as I ought, but am apt to question it ; and besides, though my sins have not dominion over me, yet I feel them too prevalent in me, and I would fain have more power and strength against them ; I would fain have my grace stronger, and my corruptions weaker. Wherefore I, knowing that Christ,

November 23d.

'Casting all your care upon Him ; for He careth for you.'—
1 PET. v. 7.

YES, blessed Jesus, I would cast all upon Thee ; sins, sorrows, trials, temptations. Thou art the almighty burden-bearer of Thy people ; for the Lord Jehovah hath laid on Thee the iniquities of us all. And as Thou bearest all our sins, so Thou canst all our sorrows. And dost Thou not bear all the persons of Thy redeemed ? Dost Thou not bear all our troubles, all our exercises, all our temptations, trials, difficulties ? The government is upon Thy shoulder, the care of the Churches is all with Thee. And shall I not cast all my care upon Thee ? Shall I be careful for many things, while Jesus saith, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee' ? Oh for grace to sit loose to all things, and to leave all things with Thee ! Lord, do Thou bear me up when I am falling, support me when weak, uphold me against all mine enemies ; carry me safe through a life of grace here, and finally bring me home to Thy glory, to behold Thee, and dwell with Thee for ever.

REV. DR. HAWKER.

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November 24th.

'But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.'—ROM. vii. 23.

ART thou in thy sins, and out of Christ ? Remember all thy doings are a ladder too short to reach heaven. Oh happy thou, did thy soul fathom her own misery ! Wert thou more out of love with thyself, thou wouldst be more in love with Christ ; were thy self-confidence levelled, thy breathings after Christ would be more earnest ; thy leanings upon Christ with greater confidence. Christian ! it is thy duty to endeavour to keep

the whole law of God. The gospel requires obedience as well as the law ; yea, the gospel wills no less inward or outward holiness than the law ; and if thy nature be spiritual, though thou be not able, yet thou wilt be willing to obey the law of God in the highest degree ; and thy coming short of gospel service will call for thy laying out of gospel sorrow. Whoever thou art, take heed of being wedded to thine own blindness ; if thou art blind, thou art blind at noon-day.

REV. J. CRADOCOT.

November 25th.

‘ And He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.’—Ps. cvii. 7.

BLESS the Lord, O my soul, and forget not any of His benefits ; for He hath distinguished thy life with loving-kindness, and followed thee with tender mercy all thy days ! Yes, I would remember and reckon them up, but they are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore. What, then, is to be done ? Oh, my blessed Lord ! I will think of a small part of them, and these shall quicken my steps, and cheer my heart, until I arrive at Thy kingdom, where I shall have such a multitude placed before my mind, and where that mind will be so enabled to contemplate and to feel them, that eternity itself will be too short to exhaust, or even to utter, all Thy praise. Again and again will I call on angels to hear my song ; and on all the spirits of the just made perfect, to assist me in the mighty, the inexhaustible theme. There will I show them all the way by which the Lord led me, all the providences He employed for my good, all the deliverances He appointed for my preservation, and all the long forbearance He exercised towards my rebel heart ; and, finally, how He pardoned, redeemed, and saved my soul from everlasting death, through Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be co-equal and everlasting praise. Amen.

'I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
 And when my voice is lost in death,
 Praise shall employ my nobler powers ;
 My days of praise will near be past,
 While life, and thought, and being last,
 Or immortality endures.'

REV. R. MARKS.

November 26th.

'Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow ; for what is your life ? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.'—JAS. iv. 14.

WHERE, amidst so much that is fluctuating, shall we discover what is permanent ? Since riches afford no security against adversity, beauty from disease, nor power from the stroke of death ; since friends, Christian friends, must be torn asunder, whither shall we go for safety, consolation, and peace ? If we belong to the family of God, and have an interest in His favour, we need not fear : 'The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but His loving-kindness shall not depart from us, neither shall the covenant of His peace be removed.' The Church may be deprived by death of members most distinguished for piety and usefulness : its brightest ornaments may fail, and they with whom 'we have encompassed God's altar with joy,' may 'be seen no more among men ;' but Christ Himself ever 'lives.' He is the same now as in former days, and will continue in after ages to be the same as He is now ! 'He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Unchangeable in His person, our great Redeemer is equally immutable in His character and love. He still watches over His people with affectionate anxiety, relieves them in difficulty, succours and protects them in danger, and confers upon them, in rich abundance, the blessings which He died to procure, and is exalted to bestow ! 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.'

REV. A. FISHER.

November 27th.

'In Thy presence is fulness of joy ; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'—PS. xvi. 11.

THE supply in this life is proportioned to the hunger. It gives strength to the weak, and renews the life of the faint ; but it still points onward. *Not having seen, we love* ; but for fulness of love we must also see. Christ may be formed in us now ; but in order to be entirely like Him, we must see Him as He is ; and this sight is future. Not till the corruptible shall have put on incorruption, can they who have here hungered and thirsted for it be finally filled with righteousness. To have reached that home where God shall be all in all ; to have completed this toilsome journey ; to have finished this long fight ; to have learned thoroughly life's difficult lesson ; to have been at last made to value above all price that which earth cannot give,—is a consummation worthy of any waiting and of any suffering, a consummation to which may God of His infinite mercy bring us all. Here is trial, vexation, disappointment, tardy progress, and wearisome backsliding ; here rest is not, because Christ is not. There at last, His servants shall serve Him, and why ? They shall see His face. C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.

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November 28th.

'Unto you therefore which believe He is precious : but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.'—1 PET. ii. 7.

READER ! put these few following questions to thine heart, as in the presence of God ; if thou canst answer them affirmatively, doubt not thy real interest in Him. Is He now to me the chiefest of ten thousand, yea, altogether lovely ? Do I behold an infinite amiableness and glory in His person, a transcendent excellency in His righteousness, an inexhausted fulness in His grace, and a heaven-of happiness in His love ? Do I esteem

Him above every name, love Him above every creature and thing, and value an interest in Him above ten thousand worlds? Is the language of my soul, 'None but Christ, none but Christ'? 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire besides Thee'? Is all the world, all that is admired in it, esteemed by me as nothing, when compared with a glorious Christ, the ravishing sweetness of His love, and the unsearchable riches of His grace? Do I wish nothing so ardently, seek nothing so diligently, and rejoice in nothing so greatly, as to win Christ, and be found in Him?—Be this my portion! And can I say, I wish, I ask for more!

REV. C. A. BOGATZKY.

November 29th.

'And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.'—EZEK. xlviii. 35.

THE believer walks not by the light of this world, but chiefly by the 'candle of the Lord,' which by the Holy Spirit has been relighted in his heart, and by the word of God, which has now become 'a light unto his feet, and a lamp to his path;' and hereafter it is to be entirely so, when the Lord shall be his everlasting light, and his God his glory. Let us not then complain of our trials, but try to bear them patiently, yea bravely. 'The Lord is there.' He is in them, and will be with us in them. Affliction cometh not forth of the dust; nor without a needs be and a suitable object; and if only we can bring ourselves to believe 'The Lord is there,' all is well; yea, blessed, this is your comfort. When God looks upon the Church, He looks on Jesus, and sees her in Him; sees her a glorious Church, 'without spot or wrinkle or any such thing;' He sees each member 'complete' in Christ, 'Every man perfect in Christ Jesus.'

REV. J. W. REEVE.

November 30th.

'For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.'—Eph. ii. 8.

THEREFORE, thou child of God, fear not. Thou hast the promise, the power, the mercy, and the truth of Jehovah on thy side, and who can prevail against Him? If thou dost not wholly believe, or art not perfectly cleared from all doubts, be not, however, dismayed. The faithfulness of thy Lord is not grounded upon the perfect exercise of thy faith, but upon His own sovereign grace and love. He was the author, and He will be the finisher of all in thee, as well as of all for thee. If God did not spare His own Son for thy sake, what will He spare beside? Who shall, or who can, lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God Himself, with whom there is neither evil nor folly, that justifieth thee from both. Who can condemn thee? It is Christ who blot-teth out thy sins by His precious blood, or rather is risen again to present thee faultless in His righteousness before the throne, and to plead for thee as that Advocate who never lost a cause. Who shall separate thee from the love of Christ? Shall the evils of life, all the distresses of time, all the rage of the devil? Nay, in all these things, thine almighty Saviour will render thee a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, because He hath loved thee.

A. SERLE, ESQ.

December 1st.

'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.'—
GAL. vi. 2.

THE Jews would not willingly tread upon the smallest piece of paper in their way, but took it up ; for possibly, said they, the name of God may be on it. Though there was a little superstition in that, yet much good may be learned from it, if we apply it to men. Trample not on

any ; there may be some work of grace there thou knowest not of. The name of God may be written upon that soul thou treadest on ; it may be a soul that Christ thought so much of, as to give His precious blood for it : therefore despise it not. This holy and humble sympathy argues indeed a strong Christian, and ‘nothing truly (as one says) shows a spiritual man so much as the dealing with another man’s sin.’ Far will he be from the ordinary way of insulting and trampling upon the weak, or using rigour or bitterness, even against some gross falls of a Christian ; but will rather vent his compassion in tears, than his passion in fiery railings ; will bewail the frailty of man, and our dangerous condition in this life, amidst so many snares and temptations, and such strong and subtle enemies. Christian pity is divine. There is most of natural pity in the best and most ingenuous natures ; but where it is spiritual, it is a prime lineament of the image of God ; and the more absolute and disengaged it is, in regard of those towards whom it acts, the more like unto God.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

December 2d.

‘Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.’—2 COR. viii. 9.

‘ALL things are yours !’ How insignificant are all the riches of this world, when compared with ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’ ! Observe how Jesus enriches His people—‘That ye *through His poverty* might be rich.’ Had He not become poor, we never could have become rich. He therefore humbled Himself that we might be exalted. He died that we might live. He wore a crown of thorns, that our heads might be encircled with diadems of glory. He was arrayed in a gorgeous robe, that we might shine forth with ineffable brightness. Instead, therefore, of being ashamed of the poverty of the Saviour, we will rather glory in it, seeing that it is ‘through’ or by

means of it that we are blessed in time, and hope to be blessed in eternity. Let our motto then be, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

REV. CHARLES MORRISON.

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December 3d.

'As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you : continue ye in my love.'—JOHN xv. 9.

OH how amazing was the love of Jesus ! This, *this* was the secret why He loved not His own life unto the death. He loved sinners too well. He loved us better than Himself. With all our sinfulness, guilt, wretchedness, and poverty, He yet loved us so much as to give Himself an offering and sacrifice unto God for us. Here was the spring-head whence flowed these streams of mercy. This was the gushing fountain that was opened when He died, and when they taunted Him, and said, 'If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.' Oh, what a reply did His silence give ! 'I came not to save myself, but my people ; I hang here, not for my own sins, but theirs ; I *could* save myself, but I came to give my life a ransom for many.' They *thought* the nails alone kept Him to the cross ; He *knew* it was His own *love* that fastened Him there. Behold, reader, the strength of Immanuel's love. Come, fall prostrate, adore, and worship Him. Oh, what love was His ! Oh the depth ! Content not thyself with standing upon the shore of this ocean ; enter into it, drink largely from it. It is for *you*, if thou dost feel thy nothingness, thy poverty, thy vileness ; this ocean is for you ; it is not for angels, it is for men ; it is not for the righteous, but for sinners.

REV. O. WINSLOW.

December 4th.

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.'—EPH. i. 3, 4.

WERE the Church to realize her true character and dignity, her heavenly parentage and exalted destiny, surely she would keep herself unspotted from the world, —far apart from its follies and sins, chosen of the Father, redeemed by the Son, dwelt in by the Holy Ghost, heir of all things with Christ; surely the consciousness of being the possessor of such a glory would lead her to have her conversation in heaven! Ah, it is the losing sight of her high calling that lowers her character and spreads earthliness over all her actings. It is this that brings her down to so low a level, that she can scarce at times be distinguished from the children of men. She is but a stranger here; and what has she to do with the fellowship of that vain world from which she has been delivered? She has received forgiveness through grace, and stands before God as His accepted priesthood; and what has she to do with the self-righteous observances of those who are all their lives groping after forgiveness through the labour of their hands?—The bride of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the Father's chosen one,—what has she to do with the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, the pomps and pleasures of a world to which she has been crucified through the cross of Christ, and out of which she has been called through grace to be the heir of the kingdom which cannot be moved.

REV. H. BONAR.

December 5th.

'And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.'—REV. xxi. 21.

THE street and the city will be splendid and durable as the purest gold, clear and transparent as the purest

glass. In that happy world, the beauties and advantages which are here divided, and incompatible, will unite and agree. Our glass is clear but brittle, and discovers only a surface ; and thus it is with our minds : the powers of the imagination are lively and extensive, but transient and uncertain ; the powers of the understanding are more solid and regular, but at the same time more slow and limited, and confined to the outside properties of the few objects around us ; but when we arrive within the veil, the perfections of the glass and gold will be combined, and the imperfections of each will entirely cease. Then we shall know more than we can now imagine—the glass will be all gold ; and then we shall apprehend truth in its relations and consequences ; not, as at present, by that tedious and fallible process which we call reasoning, but by a single glance of thought, as the light pierces in an instant through the largest transparent body. *The gold will be all glass.*

NEWTON.

December 6th.

'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him !'—LUKE xi. 13.

PRAY for the Spirit, you who have never yet had His illumination or His grace, and let the cry be a cry. For, indeed, you are crying for your life ; you can truly live only in God. If the Spirit of God does not come and stay, you can only die. In regard to all that is best and grandest in your life, you cannot live without Him ; but He is as free to you as to any Christian soul. If He could make a difference between one and another, surely He would hold Himself in a diviner readiness to answer a *first* cry. He waits to come ; He longs to come ; He waits not far off, but close and near, as near as the air, or the light, or the falling rain. He is burdened with the love of God, and longs to shed it in all fruitfulness and beauty over your sterile life. He is straitened with the

baptism of your conversion—let it be accomplished. This is true ; this is as true as Christ Himself. You believe, you never doubt, that God has given His Son. That is done, and the gift stands in human history and in human thought the central certainty of this world. But even that is not more certain than this, that God will give His Holy Spirit to those that ask Him. DR. RALEIGH.

December 7th.

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.'—JOHN xiv. 27.
'There was no room for them in the inn.'—LUKE ii. 7.

IN the inn of Bethlehem there were many going to and fro, and much hurry and disquietude, while caravans were unloading or making up their complement of passengers, and the divan presented a spectacle of many costumes, and resounded with wrangling, and barter, and merriment. But in a stable hard by there was a tender joy too deep for words, and a stillness of adoration which seemed to shut out the outer world. . . . The soul of man is a noisy hostelry, full of turmoil and disquietude, and giving entertainment to every vain and passing thought which seeks admittance there. But when Christ comes, and takes up His abode in the heart, He reduces it to order and peace; and though it may move amid the excitements and confusions of life, yet hath it an inner stillness which they cannot disturb or destroy; for the King of Peace is there, and peace is the purchase of His cross, and the last legacy of His love, and His ancient promise to His people.

THE REV. E. M. GOULBURN, D.D.

December 8th.

'For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'—PHIL. i. 21.

THERE is something in death at which nature shudders and starts back; and well, indeed, may the heart of the

impenitent and unbelieving recoil at the thought of it ; for to such a man it is an event pregnant with consequences which time cannot measure, and which the mind trembles while it labours to conceive. But why should the genuine Christian be afraid ? Death to him is not the end but the commencement of life, and the grave is the road to immortality. Well may we lay ourselves down in peace, when we call to remembrance that Christ has been there before us ; that He is risen again, and that He who died to redeem us will watch our sleeping dust ; so that, though it may be scattered to the winds of heaven, or trodden under feet of men, not a particle essential to our identity shall fail of being raised up at the last day.

Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead ! Why then should we, through fear of death, be any longer subject to bondage ? Let us rather lift up our heads and rejoice, seeing that the day of our redemption draweth nigh. Heaven and the grave are now allied ; so that now, confiding our souls to the protection of our Almighty Redeemer, we may anticipate our dissolution with joy rather than alarm, and at last meet death with the song of triumph, ' O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?'

REV. A. FISHER.

December 9th.

'Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.'—ISA. xlv. 24.

THE essence of the gospel is a free promise, free gift, free grace. A Saviour ! a Saviour ! is the loud proclamation of the gospel. Oh, here lies God's order, to bring a soul to Christ, and then he is brought to holiness ! Man's order is to bring him to holiness, that he may come to Christ. But this is to try to wash the Ethiopian white.

As to the services of believers, those done in faith are

accepted, but are not the ground of the acceptation of the *person*. They are the object of acceptance, but not the cause why the person is accepted. They are accepted, but not to the end of justification ; nor doth justification consist therein, but is freely by grace through the redemption of Christ Jesus. God hath respect to Abel, and then to his offering. Our services are accepted *in Jesus Christ*, as well as our persons. I say, both our persons and performances must be wrapped in His most perfect righteousness, that they may be accepted ; and though God does not find a perfect righteousness *in us*, yet He finds this in Christ, else He could not bear with our weaknesses, and none could be saved.

REV. J. BEART.



December 10th.

' Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.'—GAL. ii. 16.

No man is justified by the deeds of the law, but by the faith of Christ. He was punished for thee, and therefore thou shalt not be punished. I do not say we ought to do no good deeds ; but I say, we should do no good works to the intent to obtain remission of sins, and the inheritance of heaven ; for God saith, Thy sins are forgiven for my Son's sake, and thou shalt have the inheritance of heaven for my Son's sake. I condemn not good deeds, but I condemn trust in our works ; for all the works wherein a man putteth any confidence, are by his confidence poisoned, and become evil ; wherefore thou must do good works, and beware of doing them with the view to deserve any good for them. In a Christian man's life, and in order of doctrine, there is the law, repentance, hope, charity, and the deeds of charity ; yet in the act of justification there is nothing else in man that hath part or place but faith alone, apprehending the object, which is Christ crucified, in whom is all the worthiness and fulness of our salvation.

PATRICK HAMILTON.

December 11th.

'For we walk by faith, not by sight.'—2 COR. v. 7.

THE Christian walks by faith, not by sight. He endures as seeing Him who is invisible. He has been cheered with a view of that glorious city which terminates the long avenue of earthly labours; and when faint and wearied in his pilgrimage, he can ascend some neighbouring eminence, and refresh his exhausted spirits by contemplating its lustre. The afflictions which befall him he knows that he has merited, and trusts that the mercy of his God will turn them to his correction and improvement. The sorrows which may sometimes assail those who are dear to him, he beholds indeed with the deepest sensibility, yet without dismay; for he has learned that 'whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;' He remembers who they were 'of whom the world was not worthy.' He sees that violence and confusion have taken possession of the world, and that each in his turn, during his sojourn here, must suffer something from the general disorder; but he is well assured that 'the Lord's hand is not shortened, neither His ear heavy;' that 'His eyes are over the righteous, and His ear open to their prayers.' Above all, the Christian fixes his eye with humble yet steadfast confidence upon his Redeemer. He has not forgotten the day when that merciful Lord called him out of darkness to see the light of His glorious salvation. As, then, we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so let us walk in Him, 'rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith.'

J. BOWDLER, ESQ.

**December 12th.**

'For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.'—HEB. x. 37.

RISE, then, from the dust, Christian mourner,—shake off the spirit of heaviness, and put on thy beautiful gar-

ments of praise. 'Rise, the Master calleth thee!'—calleth thee to glorify Him, by cheerful resignation, in the fires of affliction; calleth thee to seek thy future happiness in closer communion with Himself—in more entire devotedness to His service—in going about, like Him, doing good, to the utmost extent that thine influence can reach; calleth thee to look away from the clouded prospects of earth, to the unclouded prospect of the day of His appearing; and to spend the short time of thy sojourning here, as in that day it will rejoice thee, in the retrospect, to have done.

What though the star of earthly hope, that shed its sweet soft radiance for a season o'er thy path, be set, to rise no more? Shalt *thou*, who art privileged to walk in the light of God's countenance even on earth, and hopest to bask in the full blaze of His glory throughout eternity,—oh, shalt *thou* go mourning all thy days long, because in His loving-kindness the God of thy salvation has sent the angel of affliction to wean thee from a world which He knew might ensnare, but could not satisfy, and thus to draw thee closer to His blessed self?

'Yet a little while, and He that cometh will come!' Oh, think of *all* the bliss—the glory that awaits thee at His coming! think of *the price* He paid to purchase them for thee! and then say, should thy life be spent in brooding over *any* blighted hope!

REV. H. WHITE.



December 13th.

'That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'—PHIL. ii. 10, 11.

THE stupendous condescension of Jesus, in taking upon Him human nature, was announced by angels: His mission was established by proofs of His omnipotence in suspending and changing the laws of nature. He gave eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, and

life to the dead. He stilled the raging of the sea, and triumphed over the powers of darkness. Creation sympathized in His sufferings and death; for the sun was darkened, and the earth shook, and the dead were raised. His ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on high was witnessed by men and angels; and now He has taken possession of the throne of His glory. In His person, He is said to be precious; in His grace, His riches are unsearchable. To the Christian, He is 'all in all;' He is 'made of God to him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.' In having Christ, he possesses the riches of both worlds; for 'all things,' says the apostle, 'are yours; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' He is their guide and comforter, their sun and shield, their friend and advocate. He supports them under their earthly conflicts; gives them the victory over death; and administers unto them abundantly 'an entrance into His everlasting kingdom.'

REV. C. JERRAM.

December 14th.

'But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.'—GAL. iii. 23.

FAITH is a certain stedfast beholding, which looketh upon nothing else but Christ, the conqueror of sin and death, and the giver of righteousness, salvation, and eternal life. If I would find comfort when my conscience is afflicted, or when I am at the point of death, I must do nothing but apprehend Christ by faith, and say, I believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who suffered, was crucified, and died for me; in whose wounds and in whose death I see my sin; and in His resurrection, victory over sin, death, and the devil; besides Him, I see nothing, I hear nothing. This is true faith, concerning Christ, and in Christ; Christ and our faith must be thoroughly joined together. I cannot comprehend nor be fully assured by reason that I am received into God's favour for Christ's

sake; but I hear this to be pronounced by the gospel, and I lay hold upon it by faith. With faith always must be joined a certain assurance of God's mercy. Now this assurance comprehendeth a faithful remission of sins for Christ's sake; for it is impossible that thy conscience should look for anything at God's hand, except first it be assured that God is merciful to thee for Christ's sake.

MARTIN LUTHER.

December 15th.

'Ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.'—COL. ii. 10.

WHATEVER sorrows the dying Christian sustains in the wise administrations of providence, it is by no means to make compensation to God for him; the atoning work of Christ is complete still, and the sanctifying work of the Spirit as soon as the soul is dismissed from earth; therefore it has an entrance into full blessedness, such as becomes a God infinite in mercy to bestow on a penitent sinner, presented before the throne in the name and righteousness of His own Son. 'We are complete in Him.' By Him made perfectly acceptable to God at our death, we are filled with all grace, and introduced into complete glory.

REV. DR. WATTS.

December 16th.

'And they feared as they entered into the cloud.'—LUKE ix. 34.

MY soul! here is much instruction for thy thoughts to be employed upon; sit down and take a leisurely view of the situation of the disciples of Jesus at this hallowed season on the Mount. The Lord Jesus was about to manifest to them somewhat of His glory, but the prelude to it was infinitely solemn; 'they *feared* as they entered into the cloud,' though, when there, Jesus was going to

open to their souls the richest enjoyment of Himself. And is it not so with all the sweetest manifestations which the Lord makes to His people. Seasons of sickness, bereavement, afflictions from the world, disappointments, crosses, and the like,—these are like the cloud to the disciples, as we enter them ; but what gracious events have we found folded up in them ! and, when opened to our view, how much of Jesus' love, and grace, and glory have come out of them, which, but for the dispensation, would have been lost ! And recollect, my soul, as thou lookest back and tracest the divine hand leading thee through dark and trying providences, in how many cases and in how many instances, though the cloud was frowning as thou didst enter, the most blessed sunshine soon after broke in upon thee. Precious Jesus ! choose for me in every circumstance yet remaining to be accomplished.

REV. DR. HAWKER.

December 17th.

'The Master is come, and calleth for thee.'—JOHN xi. 28.

WHEN you are called to the sweet task of bringing consolation to some suffering soul, some soul weeping over the tomb of a beloved object ; some soul groaning under a sense of its corruption, its sins, its unworthiness before God ; some soul plunged in the depths of doubt and of distrust ; oh ! then, do as Martha did to Mary ; comfort that soul with these words : 'The Master is come, and calleth for thee.' He is come, suffering soul, afflicted soul, sinful soul ; that good Master, that loving Saviour, that divine Friend whom thou thinkest to be far from thee, is at hand ; He is come ; He has not forsaken thee ; He watcheth over thee ; He is come, ready to receive thy first sigh of repentance, thy first cry of distress ; He is come, ready to pardon, to bless thee ; 'He is come, and calleth thee !' He calleth thee, by this very affliction, this very sickness, as well as in every page of His word ; He calleth thee, to make thee fully enjoy the consolations

of His grace ; He calleth thee, to speak to thy soul of pardon, reconciliation, peace, and love ; He calleth thee, to gather thee into His sheepfold ; He calleth thee, that, coming out of this affliction, this despondency, these doubts, this unbelief, thou mayest be enabled to range thyself among the number of the redeemed—His beloved children. O Jesus, my Saviour ! I hear Thy call ; I will go ; I will hasten like Mary ; I will go to Thee that I may have life. Ah ! to whom else shall I go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

REV. A. BONNET.



December 18th.

'God is love.'—I JOHN iv. 8.

GOD is love. All His perfections and procedures are but so many modifications of His love. What is His omnipotence, but the arm of His love ? What is His omniscience, but the medium through which He contemplates the objects of His love ? What His wisdom, but the schemes of His love ? What are the offers of the gospel, but the invitations of His love ? What the threatening of the law, but the warning of His love ? They are the hoarse voice of His love, saying, Man, do thyself no harm ! They are a fence thrown round the pit of perdition, to prevent rash men from rushing into ruin. What was the incarnation of the Saviour, but the richest illustration of His love ? What were the miracles of Christ, but the condescension of His love ? What were the sighs of Christ, but the breath of His love ? What were the prayers of Christ, but the pleadings of His love ? What were the tears of Christ, but the dewdrops of His love ? What is the earth, but the theatre for the display of His love ? What is heaven, but the Alps of His mercy, from whose summits His blessings, flowing down in a thousand streams, descend to water and refresh His Church situated at its base ?

REV. DR. WAUGH.

December 19th.

'Behold, He cometh!'—REV. I. 7.

BLESSED assurance ! But a little day of toil, and then we shall come with Him, or rise to join His assembled saints, dressed all over with our house from heaven, that spiritual clothing meet for the new creature in Christ Jesus. Oh, that glorious liberty we are heirs to as children of God ! one day to love our eternal Father, Son, and Spirit with unalloyed affections, when our whole nature shall be again on the side of God, and not a place left for the enemy to put his foot to harass the heirs of glory ! Oh, how joyful the promises in the Revelation are, for 'those written in the Lamb's book of life,' for those who have not the mark of the beast on them, for those who are to be sealed before the angels are allowed to hurt the earth ! Yea, He will, for His great name's sake, hide us in the secret of His pavilion ; so that He will put a song into our mouths ; yea, He will encompass us with songs of deliverance. As Christ is our *life* hid with Him in God, so let Him be our *way* and our *truth* both in doctrine and conversation. How many, from neglect of this lovely union, have almost forgotten to care about adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things ! Let us, my dear brethren and sisters, pray that we may be united in all the will of Christ. This is a basis, not for time only, but for eternity, and for that glorious day, especially, when the Lord shall come to be glorified in all His saints, and admired in all them that believe.

REV. A. N. GROVES.

December 20th.

'And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes ? and whence came they ?'—REV. vii. 13.

THE curtain which veils the invisible world from our sight is here drawn aside, and an innumerable multitude

of holy and happy spirits, once tried like as we now are, are seen clothed in white robes, and with palms in their hands, 'singing the song of God and of the Lamb.' Yes, all these glorious and happy spirits were once in this guilty and depraved condition; and whatever of purity they now possess, was acquired by a painful struggle against the tendencies of their fallen nature. Every one of them, in looking back on their history while they lived in this world, may recollect a time when they were estranged from God, careless of His favour, and disobedient to His will; and these recollections, while they must fill them with profound humility, will also enhance, in their esteem, the magnitude and blessedness of that salvation which they now enjoy, and deepen the gratitude with which they celebrate its triumphant consummation. Let us thank God for their example, and take courage; for, guilty as we are, some once not less guilty are now in heaven. And their sins, their backslidings, their bitter complaints, their painful struggles, together with their final triumph over all, are recorded, and may well serve for the purpose of encouraging *us* to persevere in the same path, which, however arduous and however painful it may be, will conduct us, as it conducted them, to a scene of perfect purity and everlasting repose.

REV. DR. BUCHANAN.



December 21st.

'And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.'—1 JOHN iv. 16.

LOVE to Christ, as the exclusive hope, and the compassionate, all-sufficient friend of lost sinners, is the life-blood of the Christian family; and wherever it flows, it carries along with it relationship to Christ, and a claim on the affections of those who call themselves His. What is a name or a sect, that it should divide those who are to live together in heaven through eternity, and who here

love the same Lord, and who have been washed in the same blood, and drink of the same river of the water of life, and have access through the same Mediator by the same Spirit unto the Father? This is a very serious consideration. It touches on that final sentence which shall be pronounced on the sheep and the goats : 'Come, ye blessed ; inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.' 'Depart, ye cursed ; inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.' It is not a general benevolence that is talked of here ; no, it is love to Christ, exerting itself in kindness and acts of kindness to His brethren for His sake. This is the grand and pre-eminently blessed feature of the Christian character. God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

T. ERSKINE, ESQ.

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December 22d.

'And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.'—LUKE xviii. 13.

THE Christian lives through mercy. His spiritual existence is all of mercy. Mercy provided a *propitiation for his sins* ; mercy called him to partake of that blessing ; mercy, perhaps, long spared him while he was deaf to the call ; mercy bears with his unworthiness, and gives him *grace for grace* ; at the last, he looks for mercy, and prays that God may receive him, 'not weighing his merits, but pardoning his offences.' And can he who feels all this, be severe to *mark what is done amiss* ? Can he be wanting in tenderness, in pity, who owes to the divine mercy a daily increasing obligation ? Impossible ! he must labour to be merciful, even as his Father who is in heaven is merciful. He must love much, who has to receive so much from love. He cannot but forgive, who has been much forgiven.

BISHOP SUMNER.

December 23d.

'And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone.'—MATT. xiv. 23.

OUR Lord, though He shrank not from duty, loved retirement. It was there He sought to deepen His communion with God: 'He went apart to pray.' It was thither He invited His disciples: 'Come into the desert, and rest a while.' It was when, in the spirit of their Master, His little flock had closed the doors against the intrusion of the world, that He said to them, 'Peace be unto you.' Is it then likely that the retirement so precious to our Lord, and to His first and best followers, should be needless for ourselves?—Child of the dust, how canst thou do without that which thy Redeemer so earnestly coveted? How canst thou hope, in the ceaseless whirl and tumult of thy feverish existence, to 'find leisure to be good'? How can a life of perpetual agitation allow the lessons of truth to fasten on thy mind? Is not this 'sowing to the whirlwind'? and what canst thou expect to reap? Learn, thou 'busy bustler in concerns of little worth,' to be quiet. 'Commune with thine own heart, and be still.' 'Go apart,' now, to sit in judgment upon thine own soul; for at the great day thou shalt stand 'apart' to be judged. 'My people,' it is said, 'shall dwell in peaceable habitations, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.' Should we not, then, cherish here the peaceful graces which may fit us for such a world?

REV. J. W. CUNNINGHAM.

December 24th.

'And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.'—2 COR. v. 15.

THERE is perhaps no doctrine of religion whose practical influence is more extensive than the death of Christ.

Who that contemplates the Son of God, 'giving Himself, according to the will of the Father, for our sins;' the Prince of life dying to expiate our guilt, to avert the misery, to procure the happiness of the children of men;—who that devoutly considers this subject, does not feel its immediate tendency to excite and cherish the best affections of the soul,—to arouse into astonishment,—to melt into tenderness,—to rend with godly sorrow, to revive with hope,—to elevate with joy? And while it has this diffusive influence on the heart and affections, it ascertains to the understandings the just title of Jesus Christ to universal obedience. 'He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again.' Jesus hath, by His cross, acquired by purchase a right to our service. 'We are not our own; we are bought with a price.' Therefore we are indispensably bound to 'glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's.'

REV. DR. FLEMING.

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December 25th.

'And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.'—JOHN i. 14.

TURN aside, my soul, this day, from every vain and ungodly thought, as Moses did at the bush, and behold by faith the accomplishment of what he then saw in type and figure of this great sight which the Lord hath made known unto thee. The word, the uncreated Word, even the eternal Son of God, taking upon Him the nature of man, and uniting both in one person; that by the union He might be a suitable Saviour for His people. As God, He was mighty to save, and fully competent to the wonderful act. As man, He was a suitable Saviour, for the right of redemption belonged to Him. And as both, He, and He alone, could become a proper Mediator, to reunite and bring together God and man, who by sin were at variance. This was the glorious news angels came down from heaven to publish. This was the song of

heaven, for which they sung glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to men. My soul, canst thou join the song? Yes, if so be thou hast received Christ in these glorious characters; if, as for this divine purpose He was born in our streets, He is born in thy heart also, and formed there the hope of glory. Oh! it is a blessed thing to have true scriptural views of the Lord Jesus, and so to receive Him, as Jehovah hath set Him forth, the Christ of God. Amen.

REV. DR. HAWKER.

December 26th.

'And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.'—ROM. viii. 17.

COME, my fellow-Christians, let us take a view of the land of promise. Here is one of the heights of Nebo, from which we may have a cheering glance at the heavenly Canaan. 'Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' Boundless glory! We shall reign with Christ over all worlds! Proud science, come hither and learn the incomparable dignity of human nature as united to the incarnate Jehovah. Tell me no more of my meanness in comparison of the innumerable orders of exalted intellect that inhabit the immensity of creation. Though there were as many worlds as there are grains of sand in the earth, there is not in them all a superior to redeemed man. Even in heaven he has no superior but God. Does not Christ reign over angels? and if we are joint-heirs with Him, must we not reign with Him? We were indeed in station made a little lower than the angels; but by our union with Christ in His incarnation, we are raised above all created beings. As we are to reign with Christ as being one with Him, we are not only superior to all the principalities and powers in heaven, but it is not possible that ever we could have a superior. To eternity we shall remain at the head of creation. O Lord, keep my eye for ever fixed on this prospect! Let me never

descend from the top of Pisgah. Ye Alexanders, ye Cæsars, look here and turn away from the mean objects of your ambition! Your souls are sordid, your hopes are vulgar, your pursuits are low. True nobility of mind is possessed only by the Christian. REV. A. CARSON.

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December 27th.

'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'—1 COR. ii. 9.

COULD we follow into the regions of blessedness the spirit of a just man made perfect,—could we see the entire conformity of his nature to the glorious image of the sons of God, and the blissful communion which he is permitted to hold with the Saviour that bought him,—could we estimate his growing capacity for the enjoyment of divine things, and the renewed communications of divine love, whereby he is ever made blessed, up to the full measure of that capacity,—or could we conceive aright of the eternally progressive enlargement of all his moral and intellectual faculties, and the endless succession of new discoveries respecting the character and government of God, whereon these faculties may be exercised; then how small a portion would the Christian's attainments in this life appear, of that eternal accumulation of moral good which the Redeemer died to commence, and is exalted to carry on? He is well aware that the separation of his moral and spiritual nature is still far from being completed,—that much darkness yet remains to be dissipated, and much impurity to be washed away. But from the moment he received it as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,—from the moment he could repose on the Redeemer's righteousness, approach God as his reconciled Father in Christ, and feel boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, from that moment the transformation was complete enough to un-

fold to him a new world, to place before him the character and government of God in a light in which he had never before seen them, and engage him in the pursuit of happiness, which an eternity of enjoyment will neither exhaust nor impair.

REV. DR. GORDON.



December 28th.

'Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.'—PHIL. i. ii.

THE most perfect exhibition of grace, whether in its letter, spirit, or preaching, is afforded to the Church in the acts and writings of the apostles. And who, that is well conversant with these, has not felt the sweet infusion of grace pervading all calls to duty, and that duty is made practicable from faith in His promise, 'who maketh us to will and to do of His good pleasure'? If *doctrines* are to be insisted on, they are recommended experimentally; whether it be the total corruption of our nature, our complete salvation by grace, or our justification by faith in the blood of Christ. If *duties* are to be enforced, we have not a whole chapter drawn out into scholastic niceties of detail; but we have them in the mass, as the rich combined expression of the Christian character, mixed up with gospel motives and encouragements, the bright truths of mercy and grace sparkling like diamonds here and there, and the loved name of Jesus sanctifying the call to duty throughout, making effort hopeful, and our sanctification our highest pleasure. If a grace is to be portrayed, a few masterly touches of characteristic excellence are given, such as that of charity, ever grounding us on faith, and reminding us that it is charity, as it is the result of the faith and hope of the gospel. Christ is the soul of *duty*, of *grace*, of *privilege*. Christ is the light and warmth which cheer and animate exertion.

REV. H. BUDD.

December 29th.

'For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.'—
GAL. iii. 26.

WE shall never conceive the fruit that is contained in our text, except we always bear in mind that, by the word faith, St. Paul means to exclude all the desert and worthiness that men suppose or imagine themselves able to bring with them to God. When they will needs go through with the matter by their own power and virtues, it is all one as if they would cut off a piece of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but He cannot be rent in pieces or divided. Therefore all the workings of our salvation must come of Him alone. We must not go about here and there seeking ways, but come right forth unto Him by the straight way of faith.

Now let us fall down before the majesty of our good God with acknowledgment of our sins, praying Him to make us feel them in such wise, as it may lead us to true repentance, that we may mourn continually before His majesty, and be so abased in ourselves, as yet, notwithstanding, we may not doubt but that He accepteth us for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake ; and that we shall always obtain sure forgiveness of our sins, if we seek it in true faith, without wavering to the right hand or to the left, but only following the path which He hath shown us. We can never go wrong when we have the Sun of Righteousness shining upon us. May it please Him to grant this, not only to us, but to all people and nations on earth.

JOHN CALVIN.

December 30th.

'And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more : and he went on his way rejoicing.'—ACTS viii. 39.

MANY imagine that one who 'rejoices in the Lord' is one who always rejoices in *Him*, as if there were no ebb

and flow—no change. My dear reader, if this is a holy joy, it must be affected by sin ; and you may be assured, that that man's joy that is not affected by sin, never came from God. It is the joy of a soldier that is in the midst of a hard fight, but yet he rejoices in his JOSHUA, and he rejoices too in those victories which his Joshua not only has accomplished *for* him, but which HE does from time to time accomplish *in* him. It is the joy of one who is not at home, and he knows it ; who is travelling onwards, and upwards, and homewards, and 'leans upon his Beloved ;' and as he 'leans upon his Beloved,' he can rejoice, although the way be rough, and the path flinty. It is the joy of a penitent, that which all who are taught of God do know—which is the element of a broken heart and contrite spirit ; for where faith is, repentance is ; faith never walketh alone, and they that have 'joy in believing' know it to be the joy of a penitent spirit. It is the joy of a returning prodigal ; and when he thinks of what he has been, of what he deserves to be, of the mighty cost that hath been paid for his soul's redemption, there is a joy, and there is a brokenness too. And I believe, beloved, that they who know the most of what this holy joy is, can understand the most of what the state of mind is, 'sorrowful yet *always* rejoicing.'

REV. J. H. EVANS.

December 31st.

'But the end of all things is at hand ; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.'—1 PET. iv. 7.

MY soul, how hath the year been hastening from thee, and thou hastening in it, from the world ! Where are the days fled ? They are gone to be numbered with the years beyond the flood ; and thou art now standing as on the isthmus of time. *The end of all things is at hand.* Friends are dying around thee, thou art dying thyself ; yea, the world is dying, and the end of all things is at hand. In this state, my Lord, well may I look up to

Thee ; circumstances so very solemn may well induce soberness and watchfulness unto prayer. Yes ! blessed Jesus, I would pray Thee so to direct each thought of my heart, that every faculty may be on the watch-tower, waiting my Lord's coming. Thou hast said, *Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Oh, then, for grace to live by faith on Thee ; and so to live, that when I change worlds, I may not change my company ; for if in time I live with Christ, and enjoy Christ, I shall not live less with Christ, nor enjoy Christ less, when I exchange time for eternity. Lord Jesus, make me watch unto prayer, and Thou wilt be, both now and then, in life and death, my portion for ever.

REV. DR. HAWKER.



Sacramental Meditation.

'This do in remembrance of me.'—1 COR. xi. 24.

I DO not go to the Lord's Table to give, but to receive ; not to tell Christ how good I am, but to think how good He is. I have a great many sins and wants to tell Him of, more than would take up the whole day ; and when I have told Him all that I know of myself, it is not the half, but a very little of what He knows of me. I bring myself, that is sin, to Him, believing that He will be all to me, and do all for me that is in His heart, and I know it is a very compassionate one. I go as a sinner to the Saviour. To whom else should I go, with my blind eyes, foul leprosy, hard heart, and rebellious will ? You tell me I must have I know not how many graces and qualifications to go to the sacrament with ; but I cannot stay for them, my wants are urgent : I am a dying man. My Lord, with His known kindness, says, 'Come : do this : remember me.' His invitation is qualification enough ; and I long to feed on Him, to thank God for Him, to take Him into my heart. I will go to behold Him crucified, and His blood poured out for me, in spite of all my sins and fears ; and though all the saints on earth

stood up with one mouth to forbid me, I go to put myself under Christ's wings, and fly to Him for refuge from the monster sin, ready to devour me.

I go to the sacrament to know God, and myself; to wonder at the reconciliation of strict punishment with free pardon; to see the greatness of my sin, and the greatness of my hope, in the greatness of the sacrifice therein represented; to sin no more, because I believe there is no condemnation for my sin; to be raised as high as heaven, and humbled in the dust; to be astonished at the mystery of Christ crucified, and to profess that I know less of God than ever.

Let me be daily thinking of the sacrament, daily in a state of preparation for it, daily living upon it, resolving to secure my portion in the love therein exhibited, by receiving it in faith and humility as love and undeserved mercy, making it my pattern, and dreading the sin which could be expiated with no less a sacrifice.

'Do this in remembrance of me.' Remember who I am, and what thou art; remember me as thy Saviour; remember me as thy Master; remember my love; remember thy obligations; remember me as hating thy sin; remember me as bearing thy sin; remember me, and fear not; remember me, and sin not; remember me, to live for me, by me, with me.

Knowing and assuredly believing the promises of God made over to me for the forgiveness of my sins, through faith in the blood of Christ, I do, from a detestation of my sinfulness, and a hearty sense of my want of pardoning grace, accept His covenant of rest and peace; trusting in Him for the accomplishment of my whole salvation, in the way of gospel-holiness, by His Spirit; and resolving without delay to put myself into His hands for that purpose. And may the God of mercies keep me steadfast in this faith and engagement, and carry me on from strength to strength, that I may be one with Him, and with my Saviour, and live for Him, and love Him with all my heart, and with all my soul.

REV. T. ADAM.

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